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THE YANKEE YACHT CLUB:

OR,

AROUND THE WORLD BY WATER.

By GEORGE G. SMALL.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCES US TO THE CREW OF THE "YANKEE DOODLE."

It was just about this time, three years ago, that there was a remarkable gathering of young men at the mansion of Abel Hardee, banker, and one of the wealthiest and most wide awake men residing on Fifth Avenue, New York.

This gathering consisted of the parents and friends of about twenty young men who had but lately graduated from the different colleges in the country, and who returned with their honors thick and fresh upon them to commence the battle of life, as their parents had fought it from the commencement before them.

And never shone bright lights over a brighter and smarter lot of young men than were assembled here on this occasion to enjoy themselves in a social reunion and hear the report of a committee that had been appointed to report upon a yachting excursion, that had been talked of among the young men, nearly all of whom were amateur yachtsmen and fond of all kinds of manly out of door sports, such as college students nowadays engage in.

Mr. Hardee had taken a great interest in this proposed excursion, that had been originally talked of as only calculated to extend to Cuba and the West Indies, and by going among the parents of the young men, he had won them over to his way of thinking and carrying out the project; and now all unknown to the young men, he was ready to supersede the committee they had appointed and to surprise them with a report.

There was music and dancing, and a large number of sisters and sweethearts were assembled to grace the occasion, while proud fathers and fond mothers viewed the assemblage as graced most emphatically by their own sons. They were all members of the highest and wealthiest families in New York, and each one was anxious to give their own a send-off in life that would insure his success.

But they all recognized Mr. Hardee's philosophy, and had agreed to his proposition regarding the proposed excursion. They had also contributed their share to carry out this plan, each taking especial care in seeing the arrangements perfected.

After the company had finished supper and while still seated around the table, Mr. Hardee arose for the purpose of making a few remarks.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "I believe you all know me well enough to understand how warm my words of welcome would be were I to resort to them on such an occasion as this. But knowing how I feel toward you all, let that take the place of any formal welcome on my part, and allow me to address the young graduates here assembled—our well beloved sons."

There were murmurs of applause at this,

and the young fellows at once became interested.

"Young gentlemen, it has been known to your parents for some little time that you contemplated placing the finishing touches upon yourselves by an extended excursion to the West Indies. You appointed a committee to superintend matters, but they soon found that matters were already being put in shape to that end, and were easily induced to resign their duties before them in the field. And now, boys, I have to inform you that we have purchased the beautiful large schooner-yacht Yankee Doodle, thoroughly rigged and equipped her, provisioned her for six months, employed a sailing master, one of the best that floats, a cook, and one able-bodied seaman to instruct in what you may not already know, and, in short, made this stanch yacht as perfect and as comfortable as it can be made, and we, your parents, place it at your disposal."

A round of applause, mingled with "bravos," greeted this announcement, and the young fellows shook each other by the hand in the most delighted manner.

"But, gentlemen, I may not have succeeded in fully surprising you yet," continued Mr. Hardee. "If not, I will inform you that all arrangements have been made for your excursion, not only to the West Indies, but to extend around the globe—for you to circumnavigate the earth."

For a moment there was silence and astonishment manifested in every face, but only for a moment, before the room rang with cheers, and again did they grasp each other by the hand.

Nothing under Heaven could have pleased them better than such an excursion or voyage, and their parents were all aware of it.

"What do you say, young gentlemen?"

"We say good, bravo, excellent!" cried they all, and in turn the different college cheers were given with a will that shook the globes on the chandeliers.

"And we are glad to hear you say so. I need not tell you how valuable and interesting such a voyage will be to you all, but it will be a voyage of roughing it to a certain extent, and that very labor you need to knit your frames and fit you for lives of usefulness afterwards. You all probably know how to sail and work a vessel of the size of the Yankee Doodle, provided you know the water in which you are sailing, or in the absence of bad weather. But we have provided for all emergencies by employing a sailing-master possessed of the highest recommendations—a regular old sea-dog, who has sailed on every acre of water on the globe, according to his own story. He is a character, and you will undoubtedly like him. It is for you now to choose a commander, also regular articles, procure your outfits, and set a day when you will be ready to sail. You will visit all climates, and must therefore prepare yourselves with proper clothing to meet all emer-

gencies, as of course you all know. Are you ready?"

"Yes—yes—yes!" was the hearty response.

"Then you can retire to the library and select your officers, and we will meet you again by and by in the parlor," said Mr. Hardee.

"We will do it," said they all, leaping to their feet and starting for the library upstairs, led by Mr. Hardee's son, Wilson Hardee, a large, handsome fellow, a recent graduate from Yale College.

Young Hardee was at once nominated for commander, he being a very popular fellow and a member of the New York Yacht Club, and the owner of one of the most successful yachts. This nomination was confirmed without a dissenting voice, and he accepted the office without hesitation.

He had long contemplated such a voyage as this, and now that so good an opportunity presented itself he was all life and animation to embrace it.

Harry White was also a member of the Atlantic Yacht Club, and was a thorough sailor as well as a thoroughly good fellow, and being very popular and one of the brightest graduates of Columbia College, he was selected unanimously for the office of first mate.

Tom Harding was a class-mate of his, and also being a good amateur yachtsman, he was selected for the office of second mate, and George Billings, of Williams College, was made purser.

Dr. Herbert Halsey, who had graduated from the Medical School with high honors, was chosen surgeon, and Edmund Chase, a class mate, made his assistant, while the others were allowed to nominate themselves to any irregular offices that they might fancy or take it into their heads to create.

This portion of the business occasioned considerable merriment, and when they rejoined their friends in the parlor they were in the highest spirits. The officers were announced, and their selection met with the most cordial approval, and it was announced after consultation all around that they were to assemble at the office of a well-known shipping merchant at noon the next day, there to sign articles and receive instructions relative to their outfits.

"Day after to-morrow at noon, then," said the newly-made commander, "you will all assemble on the decks of the Yankee Doodle dressed in the uniform of the New York Yacht Club, and there to answer the roll call."

With cheers and many a hearty handshake the crew separated for the night, full of bright dreams and joyous anticipations regarding the future.

CHAPTER II.

A YANKEE YACHT AND A YANKEE

So thoughtfully had everything tended to that there was little else for members of the club to do but pur-

personal outfits of clothing, weapons, etc., and at the appointed hour they all assembled on board the Yankee Doodle, lying at pier 13, East River.

Mr. Hardee was there some time before the parents of the others, for the purpose of introducing his son and the other officers to the sailing master he had selected, that they might become acquainted, and confer upon the route that had been talked over, and also upon other matters necessary to be understood before sailing.

This sailing-master was indeed a character, and unquestionably a "sea dog" in its fullest sense.

He was probably fifty-five years of age, about six feet six inches high, and as strong as a lion.

He had his peculiarities of dress and manner, and everybody had to respect them or take the consequences. As for his dress, it consisted mostly of a big old sou'wester, in the shape of an oilcloth hat; a thick pair of boots that reached to his knees, and into which the baggy trousers were always tucked, while a thick, rough blue shirt, always open at the throat without a handkerchief, and his sleeves rolled up so as to expose his bronzed arms, completed his uniform.

He was a chronic growler, although when in the humor could spin a yarn as big and improbable as ever startled a forecastle. He had always been at sea, so far as he could remember, and this was not the first he had been honored with the position of sailing master, and it is not the first time he has figured in a story, as some of my readers may remember when I tell them his name was Tongs. And while we are about it, we may as well become acquainted with the cook and the single able-bodied seaman who had been engaged to go with the club, after which we will let them show themselves while we deal with the present, the regular officers and members.

Chin-Chin, the cook, was a Chinaman, who has also figured in story, and who had been all over the world nearly, and had had adventures to fill a two-dollar novel.

But he was a good cook and washer, and having sailed several voyages with Tongs, he elected him on this occasion, greatly to Chin-Chin's delight, for his wife made it so hot for him in New York that he liked almost any other place better.

The able-bodied seaman was quite as much of a character as Tongs was. About twenty-five years of age, tall, scrawny and awkward. But as regards dress, he was louder and more "salty" than any sea-dog seen upon the stage. He was a good sailor, a consummate coward, although his great object in life was to bully over people who did not know him, and to make them believe that he was a bad, bad man—a blood-thirsty pirate—a thug—a terrible man to raise the lion in. He also had sailed several times with Tongs, and perhaps he also will be recognized as having figured in story before, when he was introduced as Jack Hawser.

He looked with supreme contempt upon the young fellows who came on board, dressed in their smart new uniforms, and kept entirely aloof from them.

An hour before the time appointed for sailing, the friends of the members crowded the deck and the wharf at which the Yankee Doodle lay, and all sorts of advice was being given and all sorts of promises being made.

As for Tongs, he didn't like that sort of society much himself, never having been used to it, but he took a liking for his young commander and several of the club, for he saw that they were brave, earnest, wide-awake fellows, and knew that he should probably have a good easy time during the next year, and probably enjoy more sport than he had ever enjoyed before in his life.

Chin-Chin blinked at them all without saying a word, but wondered if he had to cook and wash for all those people, including the ladies and gentlemen who were assembled to see them off.

As the hour approached, Commander Hardee piped all hands aft, and told the purser to all hands roll.

George Billings, having the yacht's muster-roll made out, now proceeded to call it for the first time as the members crowded around.

"Commander William Hardee."

"Here," was the prompt reply.

"Purser George Billings."

"Right here," he said.

"Physician Hubert Halsey."

"Here."

"Assistant Edmund Chase."

"Here."

"Cook Chin-Chin."

"Me he," piped Chin-Chin, at which there was a laugh.

"Here."

"Second Mate Tom Harding."

"Here."

"Purser George Billings."

"Right here," he said.

"Physician Hubert Halsey."

"Here."

"Assistant Edmund Chase."

"Here."

"Cook Chin-Chin."

"Me he," piped Chin-Chin, at which there was a laugh.

He glanced at them a moment, and muttered as he went to the galley:

"Pully flesh, hap."

"Will Vanderpool."

"Here."

"George Trowsy."

"Here."

"Lou Felton."

"Here."

"Ed. Van Eyck."

"Here."

"Joe Bleecker."

"Here."

"Neil Merkent."

"Here."

"Frank Fowler."

"Here."

"Jim Jackson."

"Here."

"Hen. Benton."

"Here."

"Albert Matsell."

"Here."

"Leon Granville."

"Here."

"Jack Hawser."

"Ay—ay," growled that bad—bad man, and at the same time cast a contemptuous glance around upon the company, after which he drew forth his sheath knife and cut off a big chunk of plug tobacco which he crowded into his mouth, and then swaggered forward again.

He made a sensation among the boys and their friends, just as he calculated to do, and that was glory enough for the time being. Greater triumphs awaited him.

"We are all here," said Billings, after he had finished calling the roll.

"Good boys," said several of their friends.

"Now, captain, when does the tide serve?" asked the commander, addressing Tongs.

"Just on the ebb now."

"All right. Take your final leaves, boys, for we must be away," said he, addressing his club, and they all flew to their friends.

It wasn't such an easy matter, after all, when it came to the pinch of parting with friends and relatives for so long a time, and when setting out on such a perilous voyage, and the flush of sadness that mantled every face, and the tears that dimmed so many eyes, proved it.

It was a delightful day in June, and everything looked bright and beautiful. New York never seemed so gay and enticing to the boys as it did just then, when they were on the point of leaving it, perhaps forever, for it was no holiday cruise they were going on.

But the Yankee Doodle had been built originally for the Mediterranean fruit trade, and was not only roomy, but constructed in the most thorough manner, and, therefore, they trusted themselves in her with less fear than they would have done had she simply been a fancy pleasure yacht.

And yet she had such graceful lines and looked so rakish and knotty when she had all her "clothes on" that she was the envy of yachtsmen wherever she sailed, both on account of her speed and beauty. She was schooner rigged, carrying fore and maintopsails and a jib topsail in addition to her large main and foresails, jib and flying jib, and drew, when loaded, four feet of water forward and seven aft, was provided with a fifteen-foot center-board, and was rated at two hundred and seven tons burden.

Young Hardee was the first to finish his leave-taking, and, turning to Tongs, he said:

"Captain Tongs, I presume you know the yacht."

"Know her! Well, I should say so," he grumbled. "Know her from stem to stern and from center-board to truck."

"I am glad you do, for I find she is built and rigged somewhat differently from anything I ever sailed on."

"Oh, I know all about her, sir."

"That's all right. Now a word more before sailing. You understand that I as command-

er simply represent the owner of the yacht. You are the captain to all intents and purposes, and I shall not attempt to interfere with you only in the matter of the course, as far as points to be visited are concerned and how long we shall remain—the route and stay mine. Is that the way you understand it?"

"That's it, young man; that's the way I look at it. I'm engaged for the voyage, and blast me dead-lights if I care whar yer go or how long yer stay," replied Tongs, in his old gruff way.

"Then we fully understand each other. We are all ready to pull out and make sail," said Hardee.

"Ay—ay, sir. All hands fer quarters!" roared Tongs, and nearly every member of the club responded.

Even Jack Hawser straightened up, squirted about a pint of tobacco juice over the rail, and then waited for orders.

Old Mr. Hardee came forward after the decks had been cleared to give a few parting words, and the club formed and gave him a grand yacht club salute, which he acknowledged gracefully, and finally all was in readiness.

"Cast off hawsers fore and aft, and shove her out into the stream."

"Ay—ay, sir," roared Jack Hawser, just as though he alone understood the order.

Several of the boys, however, understood the business quite as well as he did, and sprang to obey.

"Spring a line astern, and bear a hand to heave!" was the next order, and in less than a minute a line was taken about a hundred feet astern and made fast to a spile head on the dock. "Now heave!"

Jack Hawser was head man, and was the first to begin the heaving on the line, yelling at the same time:

"Yeo ho! yeo ho!" which the others soon took up, and before the yacht was hauled out of her berth, and while friends on the wharf were waving handkerchiefs and throwing kisses, they broke out into the song, which they sang together with fine effect:

"Of all the wives as e'er you know,
Yeo ho! lads! ho! yeo ho! yeo ho!
There's none like Nancy Lee, I trow,
Yeo ho! lads! ho! yeo ho!
See there she stands and waves her hands upon the quay,
And every day when I'm away she'll watch for me;
And whisper low, when tempests blow, for Jack at sea,
Yeo ho! lads! ho! yeo ho!"

CHORUS.

The sailor's wife the sailor's star shall be,
Yeo ho! we go across the sea;
The sailor's wife the sailor's star shall be,
The sailor's wife his star shall be!"

"Belay there! cast off!" shouted Tongs, and quickly the lines were thrown off and pulled on board.

"Haul on the mainsail!" and the order was promptly responded to. "Man the jib halliards! Pull away!" and up taut went the jib.

The gaff of the mainsail had by this time reached its home at the top of the mast, and lusty hands were hauling it taut. The wind caught it just as the rough old captain knew it would, and by the time the jib was taut enough to draw, the yacht was headed down stream, and the breeze soon gave her headway enough to steer.

Tongs grasped the wheel.

"Up with the foresail—lively! Give the mainsail a little more sheet. There—that will do. Now send up the flying jib."

These orders were promptly obeyed, Jack Hawser taking the lead in everything, and sneering at the soft-handed young fellows who assisted him.

In a few minutes the Yankee Doodle was sailing gracefully down the East river, cheered by the crews of other craft that she met or passed.

While the other members of the club were obeying orders, and getting everything into shipshape, George Billings, the purser, was going about to get acquainted with matters and things on board, and especially with the cook, whose direct superior officer he was.

He found him in the kitchen at work. At first sight he could scarcely help laughing at him, for he was not only quite as comical as it is possible for a pig-tailed Chinaman to be, but his dress was the most curious mixture of Oriental and American, with a little touch of the sailor style, and it made him look like an idealized scare-crow.

"Ah! so you are the cook, eh?" said Billings.

"Betee you yes, me clookee all yite," said Chin-Chin, without looking up from his work.

"Used to the business?"

"Me heap cookee alle time, so be."

"How long have you been a cook?"

"Hundred year, hap," said he, without a smile.

"What!" exclaimed the purser, in surprise.

"So be."

Billings looked at him a moment without speaking, and then the picture and story of the Heathen Chinese coming up before him, he made no further attempt to question the cook regarding his personal affairs, but went at once into matters of business, such as taking an account of stock and making himself familiar with the amount and cost of provisions on hand, together with other particulars.

Chin-Chin was perfectly passive, however, for he knew that he was good for so much a month until the end of the voyage, be it long or short, and little he cared who was his boss, or who took stock of what had been placed in the storehouse.

So Billings, after taking an account of stock to see if it agreed with the bills that had been rendered to him, retired and left the Chinaman alone, boss of the kitchen.

By this time everything on hand was working in ship-shape on board the Yankee Doodle, and she was standing off before a western land breeze, making very good headway down the bay toward the Narrows.

Old Tongs was in his glory. Year in and year out he had worked before the mast, serving under others, but now everybody on board was under him. Many a man would have been puffed up, but not Tongs. Nothing ever puffed him up but whisky, when he was on the shore and on a spree.

He stood in the cock-pit, and out from under his shaggy eyebrows he watched the movements of the younger crew, with whom he was to be associated for so long, and, bluff and rough and a natural growler as he was, he somehow warmed to them all and concluded he would like them.

"Well, you see the boys," said Hardee after everything was easy and they were off Staten Island. "How do you like them?"

"Good boys, I guess" growled the old tar.

"Royal men, every one of them, although they have not been bred in the calling. But you may rely on them in any emergency after they know you and what is required of them."

"Oh, I guess so. They seem ter be a jolly lot and made of good stuff."

"You are right. Yankee, every one of them. Of course, you will have to put up with a great deal until they learn their duties."

"Of course. The breeze is dying out. Ahoy! Jack Hawser, shake out that jip topsail, and run her up!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" roared Jack, and at it he went, assisted by the others.

"Yes, but I've got Jack Hawser there to show 'em how, an' they'll soon learn," he added, after seeing his order obeyed.

Fort Hamilton was on the larboard and Fort Wadsworth at the starboard at that point, and old Fort Lafayette almost dead ahead.

It was one of the most beautiful scenes to be found in northern latitudes in any country, and as the yacht glided gracefully onward, the members of the club gathered in knots and admired it.

Even Jack Hawser took a liking to the young fellows, although it did not become his dignity as a bad, bad man to admit that they were anything more than saplings and land-lubbers, and individuals who had as yet had no chance to learn what a terrible fellow he was.

But as yet they were at home, both as regards surroundings and the simple duties they were called on to do, and so none of them had occasion to ask him any questions, and he stood there in the shadow of the jib and looked exceedingly wise and indifferent, even haughty, as he struck attitudes, and squirted tobacco juice to the leeward.

Chin-Chin would poke his head out of the kitchen scuttle every now and then to get his bearings, and then he would disappear, just as a frog disappears from a log in the water.

Jack Hawser caught him at one of these times, and as they were old acquaintances, there was no reserve between them, and especially no airs on the part of Jack.

"Well, Chin, what do you think of it," he asked.

"Belly good. Heap good time, evelybody flesh," said he, condensing the whole thing.

"You are right, shipmate. We shall have a bully good time, but it's awful to be with such a green crew."

"Belly flesh, but belly good, so be, hap."

"But I know I shall kill some of 'em, if they come foolin' round me."

"Hap knock hellee bout you," said Chin-Chin, with a grin.

"What! I can get away with the whole crew; you know I can."

"So be, hap."

"Sheet on that foresail and them jibs!" roared Tongs.

"Ay-ay, sir," was the reply, and Hardee ran forward to superintend the movement.

"All right?"

"Yes; give the jib topsail a little more string."

This was quickly done, and then the boys broke out again into a song, the world known chorus of which runs as follows, and in which they all joined with a will:

"A life on the ocean wave,
A home on the rolling deep,
Where the scattered waters rave,
The the winds their revels keep."

"Good, by thunder!" exclaimed Tongs, who loved good singing as well as he loved good grog.

"Say, cap'n, what der yer think of these yer fresh landlubbers," asked Hawser, after the song.

"Wal, I think they're a game lot of youngsters," replied Tongs, "an' I likes 'em, I does."

"But the idea of their puttin' on sailor airs."

"Oh, that's all right. Of course they aren't salt, but yer bet they'll learn," he added, giving the wheel a half turn to port.

Jack Hawser felt lonesome, and he couldn't even get Tongs to side with him in belittling the boys, so he swaggered forward, and pretended to be investigating the weather they were to have.

"Cook ahoy!" shouted Tongs.

"Me ho, hoy!" replied Chin-Chin, sticking his head up out of the kitchen.

"Clear the cabin, and swash out yer grub."

"So be," and again he disappeared.

"Now, then, lads, we'll have our first meal on board," said Hardee.

"I'll bet it will taste good," was the general opinion expressed.

In a few moments Chin-Chin was flying back and forth from the kitchen to the main cabin, carrying dishes of savory food and getting supper ready, while the members of the club were watching the islands around them, which they were soon to leave behind for Heaven only knew how long.

New York, Brooklyn and Jersey City were fast receding from view, and one by one the highest landmarks were being lost in the hazy distance. They were all laughing and joking, but it was evident that there were many among them who would not have cared for the moment had they been sailing the other way.

Jack Hawser was seated on the brass cannon that stood in cones. He considered it beneath his salt air dignity to speak to any of them first, and as they were all busy with each other, he was left to his solitude, his bad-man attitudes, and his tobacco.

Hardee was conferring with Captain Tongs, as was Harry White, and making arrangements for the future, which should be well understood.

"What port yer goin' ter keel for fust?" asked Tongs, after minor affairs had been settled.

"Well, some port in Florida; we will settle on which one to-morrow, so you can lay your course and sail as you think best," said Hardee.

"Ay, ay, sir."

"What do you think of the weather, captain?" asked the first mate.

"Wall, it looks good. May have an extra puff to-morrow," replied Tongs, casting his eye around. "But yer can't tell just sure till yer get out of reach of these land ruts."

"All yitee," said Chin-Chin, intimating that supper was ready.

"Now, gents, yer can fall to an' grub up," said Tongs, turning to Commander Hardee.

"Yer'll have ter make three grub-watches,

for ther table arn't big 'nough for yer all ter once."

"All right; I'll soon fix that," said Hardee, going forward.

Acting on the captain's suggestion he organized three watches or parties, the first to consist of the officers and a portion of the crew; the second to embrace the remainder of the crew, and the third the next watch on deck, Jack Hawser, and Chin-Chin, the cook.

This being arranged, the first watch went into the cabin for supper, but Tongs made a change at the very outset.

"No; I'd rather grub with ther third watch. We've allus been used ter messin' tergether, an' we arn't much company for gentlemen as harn't been used ter eatin' with ther fingers an' sheath-knives," said he, decidedly.

"All right. Suit yourself," said Hardee; and down they filed for their first meal.

Chin-Chin was there as waiter, but he looked as solemn as though he had been an undertaker with a big job on hand.

The meal, however, was a good one, and they all relished it hugely. They laughed and joked, and made all manner of sport of Chin-Chin, but he never noticed them or ceased to look solemn.

It was an hour before Tongs, Jack Hawser and Chin-Chin went down for their grub. Hardee took the wheel from Tongs, and from where he stood in the cock-pit he could look into the cabin where they were eating, and he didn't wonder that they preferred, to eat by themselves.

It was sunset when Tongs again took the wheel, smoking an old black clay pipe. Jack Hawser also started a fire in one that was even stronger, and as he again took the seat on the gun forward, he began to puff away; he looked indeed, like a tarry old son of a sea-cook.

The club was gathered midships, and while some were enjoying their cigars, they were all bending their eyes to catch a last look at familiar scenes, now fading from view as they approached Sandy Hook, the lights of which were already visible.

There was less hilarity than might have been expected, for each one felt when darkness closed in around them it would be many a month before they would set eyes on these familiar points again, if, indeed, they ever did.

The second mate walked towards Jack Hawser, thinking to find out what he was made of.

"Well, shipmate, how do you like the yacht?" he asked cheerfully.

"Oh, she's well 'nough for a plaything," growled Jack, without looking up.

"Plaything! Well, I should say she was a pretty good-sized plaything," replied Harding.

"Bah! She's only a toy ter what I've sailed on."

"Oh, I dare say."

"But she'd make a good pirate."

"What! have you ever sailed in a pirate?" asked Harding, somewhat astonished.

"Did I? I was captain of her."

"The devil!"

"Yas, that was her name," said he, between the puffs of smoke.

Harding turned away and communicated the startling intelligence to his companions, all of whom were either shocked or surprised, just as Jack intended they should be.

They conferred in whispers, casting meantime inquiring and suspicious glances at the bad man as he sat there in the gathering twilight, calm as a post.

To tell the truth it cast an additional shadow over the party, and when Tongs was spoken to about it the old sea dog allowed his face to work itself into a smile, and although he did not explain he promised to see that he did no harm. And just as the lights were set in the rigging the bold Yankee Doodle sailed past Sandy Hook light, and stood out into the broad Atlantic Ocean.

CHAPTER III.

OUT ON THE BROAD EXPANSE OF OCEAN.

THE gallant Yankee Doodle kept steadily on her course after leaving the Sandy Hook light-house behind, and with a favoring breeze from the north her sails were all drawing nicely, and everything on board was lovely.

The first evening out was new and peculiar

to several of them, but they passed the early hours in the cabin, playing cards, singing songs and telling stories, and having a jolly time, all of which pleased old Tongs, who from his position at the wheel could see and hear what was going on.

They could all sing, and quite a number of them played upon instruments, so the old captain felt assured that there was pleasure ahead. He stationed Jack Hawser on the lookout and retained the wheel until midnight, when Commander Hardee took his place and received instructions how to keep the yacht, after which Jack turned into his bunk in the forecabin, and the second mate took his place as the lookout.

As for Tongs, he threw himself down upon the deck like a big Newfoundland dog, and slept quite as comfortably.

"Call me if yer want me," he said.

"Very well, but are you not going to a bunk?" asked Hardee, in surprise.

"No, this is good deck weather," said the old tar.

The moon had risen now, and all around on the broad expanse of the water was nearly as bright as day, and as the breeze continued to blow steadily, the noble yacht bounded along like a thing of life.

Ten or fifteen miles, astern the Sandy Hook light was still visible, and Hardee could but glance fondly towards it every now and then, for it seemed like the last gleam of home.

Hour after hour passed and all went well; Tongs slept until the new watch was called at six o'clock the next morning, and after rubbing his eyes and glancing around, he looked at the binnacle and expressed himself satisfied with the way it had been handled during Hardee's watch.

"Oh, I guess we'll get along all right."

"I guess so. Ahoy, below there! Turn out!" he yelled, opening the cabin doors.

In a few minutes the members of the club were all on deck, and all at sea, scarcely one of them knowing where they were or how far from land. They only knew that home was far behind, and that they were on the ocean, out of sight of land.

But this only braved their hearts for the fortune before them, and made them look ahead instead of back, and each became more resolved than ever.

Chin-Chin was preparing breakfast while the club was trying to get its bearings.

The bad, bad man—the bloody pirate, Jack Hawser, had not yet turned out, not being due on deck until eight o'clock on account of having held the lookout watch until midnight the night before.

Tongs roused up on time, of course, for he was as methodical as a clock while at sea, and Chin-Chin was equally so, knowing and doing his business just as though he had been run by machinery that only wanted to be wound up at the commencement of each voyage.

But those who remember Chin-Chin as he has figured in other stories need not be told that he was capable of hoeing his own row against any number of men, women and children.

Commander Hardee was conferring with the sailing-master, Tongs, regarding business connected with the voyage before them, and it was finally settled that the first stop should be made at St. Augustine, Florida, about nine hundred miles from New York.

Then Chin-Chin announced breakfast, and the watch proceeded to take it in.

By this time, it must be remembered, the Yankee Doodle was nearly out of sight of land, although to the west there was a dark outline which indicated the distant shores of Pennsylvania and Maryland. But to all intents and purposes, they were out of sight of them, and "all at sea" on the broad bosom of the turbulent Atlantic. The morning was bright and beautiful, and the same off-shore breeze that had favored them from the start still belied the bright new sails, and called for no change of any moment, either in sheets or wheel.

But old Tongs, who knew the course so well, knew that this delightful state of things could not last when they neared the dreaded Cape Hatteras, and so he resolved to put the crew through a severe training in anticipation of it.

There was a long swell that boded no good to those of delicate stomachs, or to those who had not yet their "sea legs" on.

"Already three or four members of the club began to look white around the gills, and to

show a far-off look in their eyes, and to cling to the shrouds in a very affectionate sort of a way, and to assert that they had no appetite for breakfast.

For these with good sea-legs this state of affairs was first-class fun, but, to tell the truth, scarcely one of them had anything to boast of in this particular, for nearly all of them felt as though there was something wobbly under them.

There was Neil Merkent, an artist and an enthusiast, and Frank Fowler, a philosopher, that is, according to their diplomas, and who scorned the insinuation that they might get sea-sick; they were the sickest looking fellows of the lot.

But finally breakfast was all over and the day fairly begun. Jack Hawser came on deck, and after taking an observation, as all old salts are prone to do, he gobbled up his breakfast and then came on deck with his lighted pipe.

"Look at him," said one.

"An old pirate," said another.

"How did it happen that he was engaged?" asked another of the club.

"It must have been a mistake," and so they talked and speculated on Jack Hawser, the bad man.

But it must be borne in mind that this conversation was carried on by those who had no serious thoughts, for, as before stated, the majority of the club were looking very serious, and were contemplating whether or not they had better feed the fishes with the contents of their stomachs.

Jack Hawser looked them over with a sneer on his haughty old salty lip.

"So fresh!" he muttered. "What shall I do?"

Naturally enough, those who felt the worst went to the surgeon or his assistant; but, alas! they were both under the influence of the yacht's motion, and so sick that they didn't care whether she went to the bottom or kept on top of the waves, such being the effect that sea-sickness has upon everybody.

And so those who felt that went to Tongs and stated their case. The yacht was rolling heavily, and yet making splendid headway, having by this time entered the gulf stream.

"We feel awful bad, captain," said they.

"What shall we do?"

Tongs allowed a smile to creep over his mug.

"Go an' see the cook," said he, at length.

And five or six of them followed instructions.

"Sickee, hay?" asked Chin-Chin, grinning.

"Yes. Give us something to take."

"So be, alle yitee, me fix," said he.

Well, he did "fix," and this is how he went to work to do it.

He was a great joker in a quiet way, and so he cut up some fat salty-pork into chunks about half an inch square, and to each of these he attached a string about a half a yard long.

"Heap goodie," said he, presenting them to the sick ones.

"How?" they asked.

"Swally."

"What?"

"Swally—pullee up 'gain; swally some more, five, six time, hap. Make allee yitee, so be," said Chin Chin, looking as honest as a clam.

"I have heard of that before," said Frank Fowler.

"Swallow it and what—"

"Pull it up again with the string."

"So be," said Chin Chin.

Five or six of them proceeded to do so. It was something of a task to do under the most favorable circumstances, but with their poor stomachs in such a delicate condition, it is no wonder that they all rushed to the rail, and began to yell "New York" and ask the fish what they would have for breakfast.

Chin Chin was in ecstasies as he hid himself beneath the kitchen scuttle, and laughed as much as ever a Chinaman was known to laugh, while Jack Hawser actually unbent himself and haw-hawed loudly.

"Never make sailors," he muttered.

"What is the matter?" asked Hardee, coming forward to where the poor fellows were retching.

But neither of them made any reply, and while laughing at them he himself concluded that there was something wrong with his breakfast.

"Porkee?" asked Chin Chin, noticing the humor of the commander.

"Oh, go to the devil!" growled Hardee, and he started for the cabin to lay down.

"So be, tee hee!" said Chin Chin, as he saw the bold yachtsman disappear below.

Tongs, of course, knew what was going on, for he had played the same game on others dozens of times, and there was a grin all over his rough, honest face, as he held the wheel and kept his eye on the weather beam.

Before noon nearly every one of them were taken down with sea sickness, but fortunately the wind remained steady, and there was but little more to do in the management of the yacht than what could be done by Tongs and Jack Hawser.

But this state of affairs lasted only a few hours, although during that time those who were sick did not care whether they lived or died.

By three o'clock that afternoon the majority of them had recovered from the worst of their sea sickness and were inclined to laugh at those who still hung over the rail or felt more inclined to lie down than stand up.

But as night approached the barometer began to fall, and the general indications on all sides were that they were about to enter some of the "nasty" weather most always to be found off Hatteras, which they were now approaching.

The wind was hauling around to the south, and came in fitful gusts. This produced what is called a chop sea, and things began to look decidedly squally for the coming night.

"Oh, I expected it," said Tongs, "and we're liable fer have it for the next week; Jack!" he called.

"Ay—ay, sir?" roared the bad man.

"Take in the jib topsail and the flying jib."

"Ay—ay, sir!"

The first and second mates sprang to assist, but Tongs called them back.

"Avast there. You stay amidships. Lower the foresail. Mainsail and jib is all we want for awhile," he added to Hardee.

In a few moments all other sails were closely furled, and as night came on the prospects of bad weather were more noticeable from all quarters. They were approaching that point dreaded by all mariners, Cape Hatteras, and although well out at sea, there was a good chance for any but an experienced navigator to get into trouble.

Night came on with a stiff southwester that drove them further out to sea. The waves that up to this time had been moderate, now increased, and the Yankee Doodle tossed about like a cork, but every now and then plunging her nose into a wave and throwing the spray aloft, falling in showers all over her decks and drenching everybody and everything.

Jack Hawser and Tongs were used to all this, and stood it like veterans, but to the others, amateur yachtsmen who had never encountered anything more formidable than a "white cap," it was a revelation that was far from pleasant, especially as the darkness was so great that the man at the wheel could not see the lookout in the bow.

Those below conversed in whispers, and clung to their bunks to maintain their upright positions. But the officers of the club were on deck, taking everything in and trying to profit by experience.

Jack Hawser and the second mate took turns at the lookout, while Commander Hardee and Tongs shared the watch at the wheel.

There was but little sleep even for the sea-sick ones below, for the wind increased hourly and it was evident that they were on the outer verge of a cyclone, and not knowing exactly where they were, or where they might be driven to during the darkness, made them anything but restful.

It was about midnight when the stentorian tones of the captain's voice startled everybody below.

"All hands on deck!"

Every man responded. There was no emergency requiring all hands, but Tongs wanted to break them in and give them a taste of rough and rapid work.

"Mainsheet halliards! Stand by!" was his first order.

Half a dozen of the startled youngsters sprang to obey the command. The vessel was heaving terribly, and a sense of danger drove away all thought of fear and all feelings of sickness.

Hardee took the lead with them.

"Lower away on the mainsail! Steady!" said Tongs, bringing her up a point or two to the wind. "Now let her go by the run!"

The huge mainsail came down with a rush and a rattle that was startling. It happened to be Jack Hawser's watch on the fore-castle deck, and he certainly expected to see the canvas blown from the booms when operated upon by such greenhorns, but, greatly to his astonishment, it came down all right, and was gathered in by the boys so that not an inch of it went over into the water.

"To the clew-lines, quick! Gather in!"

And even this order was obeyed promptly, and although not so quickly as it might have been executed by old sailors, yet it was done so quickly and so well that Jack experienced a pang of jealous envy.

"Hang them fresh water sailors, they know more'n I thought they did," he muttered, and at the same time he tried to think of some way whereby he could astonish them and show his superiority.

The yacht was now sailing with her jib only, all the other sails being closely furled, but as that was a large sheet, and the wind blowing almost astern, Tongs had no difficulty in managing her.

The crew had retired again, but he had no notion of allowing them to do much bunking, and so in the course of half an hour he yelled down the companionway again:

"All hands on deck!"

There was another sudden turning and hastening on deck, for whatever the danger, their was not one of them that shrank from it.

"Unfurl mainsail!" yelled Tongs, and in the face of a gale and the flying spray, they hastened to obey orders. "Up with her!" and half a dozen hands clasped and unclew the halliards.

"Belay that! Take a double reef!"

Now reefing was something they did not understand over and above well, although many of them had done it before, and Jack Hawser looked to see all kinds of mistakes made, even if they did not allow the sail to get away from them entirely.

But with a few hints from Tongs they managed it all right, and when the reefed sail was pulled taut, it caught the wind, and onward plunged the yacht, as though chased by a fury.

It was a wild night to these young yachtsmen, and Tongs, while knowing exactly where he was as near as any navigator could tell under the circumstances, kept them all busy, thereby giving them more experience than they could have got in any other way.

When morning came they had outsailed the cyclone, and found themselves about forty miles at sea off Cape Hatteras, and although the sea was still running fearfully high, the wind had so far toned down in its fury that Tongs ordered the reefs shook out of the main sail, and the foresail set with a single reef.

The Yankee Doodle could stand it, and much more, as Tongs knew very well, but even with this she plunged through the waves like a monarch of the sea, dashing the spray from her sharp bows, and making at least fifteen knots an hour.

By this time the boys had all recovered from their sea-sickness, or all but two or three, and the excitement of the situation nerved them all for anything that might overtake them.

But they all remembered Chin-Chin, and although all recognizing it as a joke that all green hands are liable to have played upon them, they promised to remember him in the future.

The next morning, however, he appeared in the cabin with breakfast, looking as solemn as an owl, and you would never have suspected that such a thing as a joke had ever entered his head.

CHAPTER IV.

THEY ENCOUNTER A ROMANCE IN REAL LIFE.

FOR the next three days they had splendid weather, and under a full press of canvas, the Yankee Doodle made steamer time down the coast, although so far from land that they could get but a faint idea of the sea-girt shores of North and South Carolina and Georgia although shortly after passing Savannah they began to bear more towards the coast, for it had been agreed to stop at St. Augustine, Florida, for a few days.

And then the beauties of soil and climate began to break upon them. The weather had grown perceptibly warmer, and in the flow of the Gulf Stream they were sweeping past the outlines of one of the most beautiful countries on the face of the globe.

Admiring all as they winged past them, they laid their course directly for the harbor of St. Augustine, where they arrived five days after leaving New York.

"Gentlemen, we are approaching the oldest settlement in North America," said Wilson Hardee.

"Three cheers for the oldest town!" said the second mate.

"Seems to me the old town ought to have more than three chairs," suggested Will Vanderpool.

"They want nothing of the kind; they take theirs standing," put in Lou Felton.

"Bow watch, stand ready!" yelled Tongs.

"Ay, ay, sir," was the response.

"Anchor all clear?"

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Stand by!"

The yacht was slowly making her way inside of the bar up to a good anchoring ground near the ancient city. Those not on duty were straining their eyes to catch the beauties of the scene, for they all knew the history of the old town and had heard much of its surrounding beauties.

"Let go!" shouted Captain Tongs.

"All gone!" was the response, accompanied by the rattle of chains through the "eye" and the plunge of the port anchor into the placid waters.

In a few moments the anchor caught a grip at the bottom.

"Belay that!"

"All fast!"

The Yankee Doodle soon felt the check and swung slowly around with the tide and rode gracefully at anchor, while the mainsail and jib went down by the rub and all became quiet save the deep monotone of Jack Hawser, as he stood upon the martingale furling the jibs.

Jack had to have his old sea-dog "yeohoy's" in, if he was only pulling on a piece of tough mess beef.

It was about the middle of a delightful day, and a more beautiful picture never lay spread out before a crew than greeted the eyes of our friends as they stood on deck and gazed upon St. Augustine.

The next thing to do was to man the boats and go ashore for the purpose of mailing letters and sending telegrams home to friends. Every member of the club embarked, for they were all anxious to set foot on dry land again after their short but exciting voyage on the unsteady Atlantic.

The letters and telegrams being attended to first, their next object was to visit the town, procure such supplies as they needed, and inspect the old Spanish fort, the first built upon the continent, and still in a very good state of preservation.

Here they also found several Northerners, some of whom were eagerly sought out, and what with inspecting the ancient town and accepting hospitalities, that day and night, and the next, were spent very pleasantly.

On their return they found everything clear, bright and shipshape on board the yacht, and as both tide and wind served, the anchor was pulled from its bed, sails hoisted, and once more the Yankee Doodle was forging ahead toward the broad Atlantic ocean.

The run from St. Augustine to Cape Sable, the extreme end of Florida, is about four hundred miles, and although often attended by much danger, is one of the most delightful trips in the world, especially if the wind is from the west, or off shore, for the air is laden with the breath of flowers and the grateful odor of ripe fruit.

All in good time they reached Key Largo, the largest of the Florida Keys, and from this point a sail through the Florida Reefs is one of the most dangerous known, for here seems to be the hatching ground of the worst storms, tornadoes, cyclones, and hurricanes to be met with on the coast, although the sail through these keys is only about two hundred miles, and is generally made in good time, and when once upon the broad bosom of the Gulf of Mexico, the way becomes brighter and clearer.

They cast anchor and visited three or four of the most celebrated islands, and Captain Tongs, who knew the track first rate, managed to dodge several threatening storms, by running into the harbor of islands and waiting for better weather.

In this way the members of the club had a good opportunity of studying the geography of the islands forming the celebrated keys, and it was not until the end of the eight days

after leaving St. Augustine that they reached the islands of the Dry Tortugas, where they cast anchor, intending to stop a few days before proceeding to Cuba.

Probably the Dry Tortugas is one of the most desolate and God forsaken places in the world. During the late war it was used by the government for the banishment of political or other offenders, and to this day there is an air of desolation hanging over it that seems as though tainted with the ghosts of the many miserable wretches who perished there.

At Garden Key, one of the group of islands comprising the Dry Tortugas, they visited Fort Jefferson, guarded only by a few guns and fewer men. But they gave our friends a royal reception, and assisted them in exploring all points which interested them.

After spending a week on the different islands they returned to the yacht and made sail for Cuba, where they expected to pass at least a month.

While passing slowly along the shore of Garden Key, the wind being almost dead, they saw some maneuvers on shore which attracted their attention, especially as it had always been the resort of smugglers and pirates. Tongs was consulted.

"I think as how there's a nest of bad uns hidin' up thar," he said, bringing his glass to bear upon a point of land that was thickly wooded, even down to the water's edge.

"Pirates?" asked Hardee anxiously.

"Shouldn't wonder. What der yer say ter a run in shore an' stirring 'em up?"

"I don't care. We are all armed, and I guess the boys would enjoy a little excitement."

"Yes—yes," said several, and they ran below to arm themselves with the rifles and pistols with which they had provided themselves before starting.

"Jack."

"Ay, ay, sir,"

"Just charge the cannon with a five inch shell, an' have a good dose of grape shot ready for a second or third belch," said Tongs, giving the wheel a half turn to port.

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Jack.

In a few moments the deck of the Yankee Doodle was swarming with armed men, ready for any sort of an adventure.

Tongs ordered the second mate to go forward to the lead to take soundings, for he was now approaching nearer to the shore than he cared to do without making sure of his water, while others were standing ready to let go the anchor.

In the meantime they had approached within half a mile of the shore, and were nearing the point where they had first discovered the crowd of suspicious men along the shore. But they were nowhere to be seen now, having evidently taken refuge in the woods that lined the shore of the island.

When at this distance from the shore, and after the centre-board had been pulled clear up, the anchor was let go, and the yacht swung around with the tide that was fast setting up the gulf.

"Let go ther barker!" said Tongs.

"Where away?"

"Wait a bit; I think I know where they are skulkin'," said the captain, going forward. "There's allus a bad lot on the west end of this island, an' a little shakin' up won't do 'em any harm, anyway," saying which he pointed the yacht's cannon towards the shore and gave it the proper elevation to carry the shell just where he wanted it to go (for Tongs had once served in the navy as a gunner), and taking the cigar from his mouth, he applied it to the touch-hole.

A big report followed, and all eyes strained to catch the course of the shell that went flying through the air. But scarcely three seconds elapsed before there was another explosion in the woods on shore, which tore the trees and produced a great panic among the pirates who had taken shelter there.

"Now man the cutter if you want some fun," said Tongs, while Jack Hawser again loaded the gun.

"All right," said about a dozen of them, all armed and eager, leaping into the cutter, which was quickly shoved away toward the shore.

The men at the oars had pulled scarcely half way to the point before a strange sight met their astonished gaze, and at the same time the shouts of a man in distress fell upon their ears, and about a dozen armed pirates came in view upon the shore.

Several of the boys stood up in the boat to

get a plainer view of the person who had attracted their attention.

Within fifty yards of the shore they beheld the head of a man just rising above the water and it was he calling for help.

"Port your helm!" cried Hardee, who stood near the bow of the boat. "There is somebody drowning. We'll go for him first," he added.

Just then a volley of musketry and small arms belched from the woods along the shore, and the bullets fell thick around the boat, one of them striking Neil Merkent, who was standing in the bow.

Another shell from the yacht's gun fell among them the next moment, and again there was a panic and a scattering.

"Pull hard!" cried Hardee.

"Ay-ay."

Neil Merkent was badly wounded, and others had escaped only by a miracle, but not one among them flinched or hesitated; but their first object was to rescue the man who was calling for help.

On approaching nearer Hardee addressed him in English, inquiring what his stress was, and he replied in Spanish, telling them that he was bound to a rock and must surely perish by the rising tide if not rescued, it being now almost to his mouth.

The cutter slackened up alongside. A glance over the sides showed that the nearly drowned man had told the truth.

He was stripped half naked, and they could see that he was bound hand and foot to a rock over which the tide was sweeping.

There was not a moment to be lost.

Tom Harding, the second mate, seized his knife and dove overboard on one side of the helpless victim, while Albert Matsell did the same and was soon under water with his drawn knife.

Another volley from the woods startled them, and several balls entered the hull of the cutter, followed by streams of water.

Here was still another sensation, and a danger that demanded instant attention.

Half a dozen of the boys flew to the rescue, and by tearing their jackets they obtained caulking which enabled them to stop the leaks effectually.

But while some were doing this, the others fired a rattling volley into the woods where the smoke still curled and showed them the locality of the pirates.

By this time the brave fellows who were operating with their knives beneath the water had succeeded in severing the cords which bound the strange victim to the rock, and with an exultant, though feeble cry, he arose to the surface of the water, a free man, closely followed by the noble fellows who had so bravely gone to his rescue.

They pulled him into the cutter just in time to receive another volley from their unseen foes, but with the exception of wounding Will Vanderpool in the thigh, and making two more holes in the boat, the bullets either went high or so low as to do no harm.

But old Tongs was on the lookout, and getting a new range from their last volley, he sent about a peck of grape-shot into the woods, cutting down the shrubbery and creating a wilder devastation than ever a single charge of shot was ever known to create before.

The howls of anguish which instantly followed was sure evidence that quite a number of the outlaws had received a death dose.

At all events this settled them, for when the cutter reached the shore, which it did in a few moments, only a few killed and several wounded buccaneers were to be seen, the others having escaped.

The man whom they had rescued from drowning was one of the first to leap ashore and to go among them. He bent down and carefully looked into each man's face.

At length he came upon one, badly wounded by a grape-shot, who was dressed in a superior style, and who seemed to be a leader or something of the kind.

"Ha! Gomez de Alcion! fortune has given us a change of places," said he. "I have escaped and you are in my power."

Tongs and Jack Hawser had by this time reached the shore with the second boat.

"Want any more of 'em slaughtered?" asked Jack, brandishing a huge cutlass, seeing that the danger was all over.

"No, gather them up and take them aboard the yacht," said Commander Hardee, who had conversed with the rescued stranger sufficient to get an inkling of the situation.

"Where are you bound?" he asked.

"To Havana first," replied Hardee.

"Good! Take them on board, and I will explain at a more opportune occasion."

CHAPTER V.

THE STRANGER'S REMARKABLE NARRATIVE.

IN the course of half an hour after the return of the detachment of the Yankee Yacht Club with the pirates, who were on the point of drowning a victim whom they succeeded in rescuing at a critical moment, the boats were again in the davits, and the crew, together with the wounded pirates, were all on board.

It will be remembered that the engagement had taken place at one of the islands comprising the Dry Tortugas, at the entrance of the Gulf of Mexico.

When all was on board and in ship-shape again, up came the anchor and away went the Yankee Doodle on her journey towards Cuba, the queen of the West Indies.

"Senor Captino, I trust I have not been the cause of putting you out of your course," said the rescued man, after they were again under way and all was secure.

"Not a point," said Hardee. "But please tell us how it happens that we have the fortune to serve you at such a critical moment?"

"Senor Captino, the whole story would be too long, but a condensation of it is yours by right," said he, glancing at the pirate chief, whose wound had been dressed and who sat upon the quarter-deck, frowning with the most malignant hate.

The scene on deck was a most curious and most uncommon one. Eight wounded pirates and their chief lay around in various places, having been attended by the yacht's surgeon, Herbert Halsey, and his assistant. The whole thing was a mystery to the yacht's crew, and while their sympathies were with their wounded companion, Neil Merkent, whose wound was the first to receive attention, still there was a strong curiosity manifested by the crew to know more regarding the strange gang whom they had taken aboard.

Jack Hawser was in a state of great excitement, and stood continually over the wounded pirate chief whenever his duties would admit of it, for he had at last found his beau ideal of a bad man—a genuine pirate chief.

Had he possessed any pluck at all he would have stood by the pirate and attempted a great hit with the yacht club; but, as it was, he contented himself with striking strong attitudes and looking terribly sympathetic.

"Know him?" asked the second mate, Tom Harding.

"Know him! Old shipmate of mine," replied Jack, turning away and trying to look sorry.

The others were gathered around the rescued man, who was on the point of telling his story.

"This man, Senor Captino, is the celebrated pirate of the gulf, Gomez de Alcion," said he, in poor English.

They all started in astonishment, having heard of him, while Jack Hawser nodded significantly and turned away with a sigh.

"And you?"

"My name is Mento de Martinez, and I am a merchant in Havana. Three years ago we met in the Cuban metropolis. He was then passing himself off as a Mexican merchant, and we were both laying siege to the heart and hand of a beautiful Cuban belle. She favored me, and he swore the most bloody oath of vengeance on me on account of it."

Jack Hawser nodded significantly as the story progressed, as much as to say that his sympathies were wholly with the pirate.

"He had been resting from his ignoble calling for a while, but after my success he threw off his mask of respectability, and told me who he was, at the same time making his bloody threats. From that time his career has been more bloody than ever, but all of his endeavors seem to have been bent on ruining me and mine. The ships of other merchants have been passed by unmolested, while mine and those of my relations have been destroyed. At length, some two months ago, he caught me on board of one of my vessels. The vessel was destroyed and everybody on board put to death, with the exception of myself. For me he had reserved a more horrible death, the consummation of which you were fortunately in time to prevent. He took me to this desolate island

where he had a rendezvous, and here he has exhausted his devilish ingenuity in contriving lingering torments for me. You know the rest."

Jack Hawser, who had been standing over the wounded pirate, now reached out and shook hands with him cordially, but yet without saying a word, as though his emotions were overpowering.

"I know the rascal," said Captain Tongs, who had listened to the narrative; and then addressing the pirate in Spanish, he called his attention to several rascalities on the high seas which caused him to recoil.

"We'll just make a present of yer ter the authorities," said Tongs.

Jack Hawser heaved a sigh, and turning fiercely towards the company, a person who did not know him would have suspected that the bad—bad man meditated revolt and rescue.

"Yes, that we will," said Hardee.

"There is a reward amounting to twenty thousand dollars awaiting him, which you will have no trouble in obtaining if you may deliver him, dead or alive, to the authorities of Cuba," said Martinez.

"So much the better. We will take the most particular pains to deliver him, and not only earn the reward, but free the seas of a malignant enemy of humanity."

A spirited dialogue in Spanish at once took place between Martinez and Alcion, in which the pirate begged the privilege of settling the dispute and enmity between them by a duel.

He was wounded in the left arm and in one of his legs, but he begged fiercely for an opportunity of meeting his enemy, either with swords or pistols.

"What der yer say?" asked Tongs, addressing Martinez.

"I am willing," said he quickly.

"Good. What der yer say, boys, ter letting 'em have it out?" asked the old sea-dog, turning to the yacht club.

"Oh, give him a chance," said Hawser, whose sympathies were wholly with the pirate.

"No—no," said Hardee. "We will have nothing of the kind on board the yacht," and in this he was backed up by the other officers.

"Thort you chaps liked fun," growled Tongs, who hated Spaniards so bad that he didn't care which one got worsted, so long as one of them did.

"Nothing of the kind," was the firm answer.

This settled it, and attention was at once turned from the captives to the working of the yacht.

The prisoners were taken as good care of as circumstances would warrant, and the Yankee Doodle plunged onward through the foamy sea towards her destination.

Of course the escapade was the subject of conversation for the next few days, during which the wounds of the pirates began to heal and they were on a fair way to recovery. But they were all securely bound so as to make futile any attempt at escape.

Matters on board the yacht were beginning to get into their accustomed shape again, although Jack Hawser did not hesitate to show that his whole heart was with the captive pirate, and the impression he made upon the crew by so doing was very strong, not one of whom regarded him a whit less than a bloody pirate himself.

In the meantime Martinez had made himself popular with the officers, for he was really an elegant gentleman, and showed conclusively that he belonged to the best society, and that the strange story he had told was really true.

To the majority of the club, however, Jack Hawser was as great a mystery and as much of a hero as Alcion was, and several times attempts had been made to draw him out; to get at the terrible story of his life. But like a good actor he had always held it back, thus keeping up the interest and the mystery regarding himself.

They were all gathered in the waist of the yacht two or three days after the adventure, and while sailing through the Gulf of Mexico, and naturally enough the conversation turned upon the capture of the pirate chief and the prospects of obtaining the reward from the Cuban authorities.

Jack Hawser was leaning against the rail-lines, masticating tobacco, and squirting the juice to the leeward, at the same time looking as deeply mysterious and bad as ever.

"Now, speaking of pirates, reminds me of a story," said Will Vanderpool.

"Well, give it to us," said several.

"All right. This is a regular old fashioned romance, fellows, and happened in the Caribbean Sea. It has never been published, but there is the best authority for saying that it is true," said he.

Jack Hawser turned towards him with a look of pity, as much as to say: "What do you know about spinning yarns?"

"In the year 1812—" began Vanderpool.

"Avast, there, shipmate," said Hawser, in a deep bass voice. "Don't tell anything that yer don't know all about. Now, I'll tell yer a yarn that I war in, only ten years ago."

"Yes, yes," said several, thinking they were at length upon the point of getting at the mystery of the bad man's life.

"It war durin' ther late fight atween the North an' South, an' happened right about where we are sailin' now," he began.

It would require a separate book to give the whole of Jack Hawser's yarn, but suffice it to say that during the next two hours, finding that he had a gaping and attentive audience, he let himself out in one of the bloodiest old pirate stories, wherein he figured as the hero, that was ever listened to. It was a dreadful hard dose to swallow, but he told it so straight and so soberly that they could scarcely find it in their hearts to brand it the lie it was, or to suspect that he was not a first-class hero.

The story was barely finished when there was a sudden commotion near them, and on turning they beheld Alcion and Martinez engaged in a fierce sword combat.

Where they had obtained their weapons, or how the pirate had become unbound was a mystery, but it afterwards appeared that they had all the while been taunting each other, and that Martinez, by the connivance of Tongs, had procured the weapons from the cabin, unbound the pirate chief, whose wounds were now nearly healed, and their blood being up, they were now on the point of settling the debt of hate and revenge between them.

Commander Hardee and some of his officers being roused from their observation below, at once attempted to put a stop to the affair, but so desperate was the fight between the two Spaniards that there was no such a thing as approaching them save at the expense of bodily harm.

They were both capital swordsmen and both desperately in earnest. It was a sight to behold, for seldom, if ever, do two such experts with the broad-sword ever, come together in deadly encounter. Back and forth over the deck, which was quickly cleared, did they struggle, first one advancing, then the other, while the wicked blades shed fire at every stroke. Clearly enough it was to be a fight to the death.

"Oh, let 'em have it out!" cried Tongs.

"Yes—yes. Give the chief a show!" roared Jack Hawser, dancing around and going through the motions of fencing with some imaginary foe.

"Heap hellee!" exclaimed Chin-Chin, who stuck his head up out of the kitchen and as hastily drew it when he saw what was going on.

But it would have been almost impossible to have stopped the fight, even if they wanted to do so, for it was so fierce and the swords gleamed around so like flashes of lightning that nothing short of a pistol ball would have stopped either of them.

Both contestants were thoroughly aroused, and fought with terrible earnestness, but Martinez was the stronger of the two, although not so good a swordsman as the pirate was, and after the contest had waged for fully five minutes, the pirate chief was disarmed and forced down upon the deck, and the victor poised his sword to dispatch him, when Hardee sprang forward and caught his uplifted arm.

"Hold! You shall not kill him. You have vanquished him; let that suffice."

"No, I will have his blood!" cried the infuriated Spaniard, and at once there was a struggle between Hardee and Martinez.

But the others who stood near flew quickly to his assistance, and the desperate fighter was finally disarmed.

Jack Hawser in the meantime, seeing all danger past, had rushed to the rescue of the fallen pirate, and assisted him to his feet.

The affair of course created the most intense excitement on board the yacht, but the officers took especial care that the pirate did not es-

cape his bondage after that, and that his enemy could not reach him.

CHAPTER VI.

A BLOODY REVOLT ON BOARD.

THE combat between Alcion and Martinez awakened the most intense excitement among the pirate captives on board the yacht, and although they were securely bound and placed in the hold they meditated munity and revolt.

Of course they could see that they were in the hands of a crew of boys, and they were not long in finding out that there were plenty of arms on board, if they could only get at them, and while they were leisurely sailing along on their pleasure cruise they were surely taking them to their death.

These thoughts were of course uppermost in their minds, and as they were all confined within easy conversing distance, it is no wonder that they meditated and plotted revolt.

The desperate Alcion was, of course, the leader in this, for he knew the price placed upon his head, and that if the yacht ever entered the harbor of Havana, that his doom was sealed beyond a single hope.

There was one chance in a hundred that they might succeed, but that one chance was worth fighting for, and so in the dead calm of the night they worked, and finally one of them got his hands out of the manacles and then assisted his fellows until they were all free to act as circumstances might warrant.

Once free, Alcion began prowling about the yacht in the dead of night, and while everybody else was asleep he managed to ascertain where the arms and ammunition were secreted, and to steal enough of them and to carry them to the hold where his fellows were still feigning to be bound, to arm them most completely.

But the idea of revolt was not enough for these bloody-minded rascals. It was finally resolved upon between them to set fire to the yacht, and take their chances of escape and reaching some one of the islands which still lay before them on their course to Havana.

Finally the project was matured, and two days after the exciting events narrated in the last chapter everything was arranged. Fire was obtained by taking the powder from a cartridge and mixing it with some loose cotton, and then striking it with a piece of iron.

This ignited the cotton, and in an instant it communicated with other inflammables, and the smoke went pouring up the hatchway.

"Fire! Fire!" was the instant cry, and all hands sprang toward the hatchway, but just as they reached it the pirates leaped to the deck, each armed with one or more revolvers, and suddenly confronting the startled crew, held them effectually at bay.

Never was there a more complete surprise or a more startling situation. For an instant not a word was spoken, and each one looked in the other's face as if to get at a solution of the tragic presentment.

Old Tongs was the first to understand and wholly comprehend the situation. Jack Hawser was the first to find a safe retreat behind the captain, although he afterwards claimed that he was trying to load the cannon.

Seizing a handspike, and calling upon the others to follow, Tongs leaped among them like a Hercules.

Half a dozen shots met him, but fortunately not one of them disabled him.

Wilson Hardee and the other members of the yacht club, although unarmed, save with what they could snatch in the shape of belaying pins and the like, followed his example.

But old Hercules was the man who did the business, for disregarding the pistols which were aimed at him at such close quarters, he struck out right and left with the fury of a demon, and in less than one minute he had knocked Alcion and four of the other pirates prone upon the deck, while the remainder threw down their arms and leaped overboard into the sea.

Disregarding them, the next thing to do was to put out the fire they had kindled between decks.

Calling for buckets of water, Tongs leaped down into the hold. A dozen buckets were quickly passed down to him, and with the assistance of the first and second mate, who followed him, the fire was rapidly extinguished, after which attention was turned to the prisoners.

The first thing that met their gaze as they did so was Jack Hawser, with a drawn sword, standing with it uplifted over the prostrate form of the nearly dead pirate chief.

It was a tableau worthy of any stage.

"Shall I kill him?" he cried.

"No—no," interposed Martinez, who had all the while fought nobly with the yacht's crew. "We want to take him to Havana alive if possible."

Just then the cries of those who had jumped overboard attracted their attention, and a more terrible spectacle than they presented, as they turned towards the yacht, can hardly be imagined.

"Sharks!—sharks!" they cried in Spanish. "Save us, oh, save us from the sharks!"

"Lower the boats!" cried Hardee, and in a moment two boats were dancing on the water.

But not soon enough, however, to save them all, for they were struggling in the midst of a school of sharks, of the man-eating species, and before the boats could reach and rescue them two of them were attacked, sent up piercing cries for help and were finally drawn out of sight beneath the surface by the monsters.

The others were saved from that horrid death only to be handed over to one almost as bad at the hands of the Spanish authorities.

The pirate prisoners were at once secured, and a watch placed over them. Jack Hawser, of course, postured as the hero of the fight, while Tongs returned to the wheel just as calmly as if nothing at all had happened.

"Of course, you know how it is," said Jack to some of the crew after the row was all over. "I love a fight so well that I couldn't stand by and not take a hand in. My feelings are allus with the undermost dog in the fight, but this Alcion did me an injury once, and so I took this time ter go for him. But if you fellows hadn't called out just as you did I should have finished him."

It so happened in the confusion and excitement that no one observed his conduct, and he knew it, so there was but little difficulty in his being a hero, which he wanted to be, of course, and this gave him a chance to spin some terrible yarns regarding his own experience.

But after that there was no more danger of the pirates rising or giving them any more trouble, and the next day they entered the beautiful harbor of the Queen Island of the West Indies, Havana, Cuba.

Government officers came on board, and the troublesome passengers were at once transferred to their keeping, together with a claim for the large reward that had been offered for the pirate, Alcion.

The sail from Florida Keys had been one of continued excitement, but now they prepared to remain on the island, visiting several cities, and making themselves familiar with what they had only read of heretofore.

The merchant, Martinez, whose life had been saved in such an opportune manner, proved to be not only all that he had said, but a right royal entertainer, for he insisted upon the club making his magnificent house their home during their stay, but he could not do enough for them, collectively or individually.

Neil Merkent, who had received the wound in his behalf, was the recipient of special favors at his hands, and the best that money or influence could procure was placed at his disposal, and he was removed to his own house, where he remained during the entire visit, at the end of which he was wholly recovered.

And during their stay in Havana he was their constant companion, entertainer, and guide to all points of interest, and on their departure from Cuba for the Island of Jamaica, he stored the yacht's locker with many good things, and gave them letters to his friends, both in Jamaica and Hayti.

Well, after a long stop they were once more on the open sea, or the beautiful gulf of Mexico, bound on a continuation of their voyage around the world. On the second day they sighted the coast of Yucutan, a peninsular second only to Florida in extent, sailing near enough to Cape Catouche to get a distant view of its beautiful but extremely wild scenery.

On the fifth day they reached Kingston, Jamaica, where they rested for a week, going about and seeing all there was to be seen and learned regarding the towns and people, especially the natives.

From Kingston they sailed for St. Domingo,

where they spent another week, after which they set sail for a long journey that would take them through the Caribbean sea, along the coast of Venezuela, South America, their next stopping place to be at Trinidad, an island not far from the mouth of the Orinoco river.

They were now in the Torrid zone, and the heat was so oppressive that they could hardly endure it, none of the club ever having experienced it before. But Tongs, Jack Hawser and Chin-Chin were not in the least put out, having endured it often.

There was but little wind, and an awning stretched over the deck was the only thing that made life endurable, even with the thinnest clothing. The sea at night was beautifully phosphorescent and the St. Elmo's fire gleamed at the mast heads. Flying fish were very abundant, and huge sea birds, such as the albatross, sailed in lazy majesty through the heated air, and Tongs showed them how to capture them, which afforded them much amusement and helped vary the monotony of the sluggish voyage.

"Dreadful hot!" was the burden of everybody's lament as they lounged about the deck, courting the shade and trying to find a cooler place somewhere.

"We shan't have more'n a week or two of this toast if we have good luck," said Tongs.

"Oh, this aren't nothing," remarked Hawser, as some of them spoke of the heat.

"Nothing!" exclaimed several.

"No. I've seen it so hot that the whole Caribbean sea war abillin' for a month at a time."

Several prolonged whistles greeted this, but he looked so indignant at what looked like a suspicion of his truthfulness, that the subject was dropped, and each man attempted to fan himself with something.

Two days afterwards they had even more wind than they wanted, and for ten hours the Yankee Doodle sped along through a hurricane under closed reefed jib and foresail, driven by a dangerous coast, with sky so overcast that no observation could be taken.

But sturdy old Tongs took them through all right, although when the wind went down and the sun again appeared, they found themselves a hundred miles north of the island of Trinidad, and not another sail in sight. This, however, did not disappoint them, but towards night a craft suddenly hove in sight, around from behind one of the small islands which mark the course, bearing straight down upon them.

Night came with its sudden darkness, and Tongs showed by his anxious looks and the orders he gave that he regarded the craft with great suspicion; in short, he believed it to be one of the many sneaking pirates who often pounce upon unarmed vessels in this locality.

CHAPTER VII.

A FIGHT WITH PIRATES.

"You seem anxious and suspicious, Captain Tongs," said young Hardee, who had been watching him with some concern.

"Wall, I don't like the looks of that cuss as is bearing down on our larboard quarter," said he.

"Why, what do you suspect?"

"I 'spect it's a cussed pirate."

"You don't say so?"

"Yes, I do, though, an' I only wish we had a few more hours of daylight."

"But I thought there were no pirates abroad now-a-days," said Hardee, curiously but anxiously.

"But thar is, though, cussed sneaks that lay in wait ter pounce on unarmed vessels at night an' get away before light with their plunder. Thar's a good many of 'em 'round 'mong these islands."

"But can't we outsail her?"

"That thar's a question. I can't see her now, but afore we lit ther binnacle lamp she war gettin' a good breeze that we had just sailed out of, an' war a gainin' on us smartly."

"We'll change the course and sail away from her in the darkness, eh?"

"That would puzzle old Neptune himself in these bad waters. I've got my course, an' if I change it 'till we reach the Point Yeban light, we stan' a mighty good chance of going ashore on some of these nasty little islands or reefs about here."

"You know the course well, then?"

"You bet I do."

"Well, then, all we can do is to pipe all hands to quarters, armed to teeth, load the cannon with a good charge of grape and await attack, if they attempt to make one," said Hardee, resolutely.

"Them's ther way ter tork it, young man."

"That's so. I'll go below where the boys are at grub, and tell them what we have to do."

"All right."

"But, I say, I don't see her lights," he said, looking through his sight glass.

"Yer don't s'pose a sneak-thief's goin' ter show his lights, do yer? That's what makes her more suspicious. She probably knows every inch of water, an' can change her course a dozen times without showing her lights."

The young commander hurried to the cabin where the members of the club were eating, drinking and enjoying themselves as only such a crowd of young fellows can.

"Boys, do you want some fun?" he asked, in a cheerful tone.

"Why, of course we do," said several.

"I mean some extra fun."

"Of course. What is it?" asked Hen Benton, a wide-awake, rollicking fellow.

"Captain Tongs says there is a sneak-pirate bearing down on us."

"The devil!"

"Yes, several of them, undoubtedly."

"Well, what of it—what are we to do?"

"He says that this sort of craft is quite common in this latitude and among these islands, and they generally swoop down like hawks on unarmed vessels and take whatever they can get away with. And so, if you want some extra fun, all you have got to do is to arm yourselves thoroughly and stand by ready to receive them in right royal Yankee style."

A loud cheer greeted this proposition, and a rush was made for the chests containing the arms.

"All hands up!" shouted Tongs. "Close the cabin door so as to shut out the light."

In a few moments the entire crew was armed with cutlasses, rifles and revolvers and on deck, peering around in the gloom to get a sight of the pirate and awaiting orders.

"Douse that thar forward riding glim!" said Tongs in a deep, low tone, and quickly the riding lamp at the foremast top-head was lowered.

Tongs looked aloft as if to make sure that all was right and taut, and that the lantern hanging at the leeward of the mainmast was not in a position to be visible from the direction the pirate was supposed to be approaching, and then he directed his spy-glass and swept the windward searchingly.

"See anything?" asked Hardee.

"Yes."

"Where away?"

"Bearing right down on our weather quarter," replied Tongs, handing him the glass. "All hands out of sight down behind the port bulwarks," he added, and the command was at once obeyed.

There was now nobody standing up but Jack Hawser, who held the lookout forward, the youthful commander, Hardee, and the first and second mates. The two surgeons, anticipating bloody work, were below preparing for it.

The breeze had by this time died out so completely that the yacht had no headway, and her huge sails hung limp and useless. There was a strong current running which was bearing them along south by east, and this was only made visible by the phosphorescent light which broke from the little waves which rustled around and broke with a peculiar "chuck" against the hull.

"Look out there!" cried Tongs.

"Ay—ay, sir," responded Jack Hawser.

"Is the cannon loaded?"

"Yes, sir."

"What with?"

"Powder."

"Send down about a peck of grape into its gullet and stand ready," he added, turning to the first mate.

"Ay—ay, sir."

It must be borne in mind that the terrible bad man, that ex-bloodthirsty pirate, Jack Hawser, had all the while been paying strict attention to his duties as lookout on the fore-castle deck, and at this time had no idea of what was going on.

"What's up, shipmate?" he asked, as the mate went forward with a two-quart measure of grape shot.

"There's the pirate bearing down on us."

"Thunder! Where away?" he asked, anxiously.

"On the weather beam. Has she got a good charge of powder in?" he asked, going to the gun and removing the shield cap from its muzzle.

"Yes, big charge. But who says there's a pirate? I don't see anything," he added, looking searchingly into the windward darkness.

"Captain Tongs says so, and he knows," said the mate, pouring the shot into the cannon.

Jack didn't bristle up and show himself for a fight as might have been expected, but on the contrary he was remarkably quiet.

"You had better go into the cabin and get a pair of revolvers!"

"Ara—think so?" he asked, abstractedly.

"Certainly, for if there is a fight we shall depend a good deal upon you."

"Well—why, of course."

"But you don't hesitate?"

"Me! Me hesitate when thar's a prospect of a fight? I guess not!" said he indignantly.

"Well, of course, I thought not."

"But yer see, mate, ther news was so good that I couldn't hardly believe it."

"Oh!"

Jack at once made his way into the after-cabin, where he even found young Neil Merkent, who had been so severely wounded, and who was even now but partially recovered. He was loading all the spare revolvers, and with brave determination had two of them close at hand to use himself, provided it was necessary.

Jack hastily armed himself with a pair of navy revolvers, and buckled an old broadsword around his waist.

"Go for them, Jack," said Merkent encouragingly.

"Wal, rather! Don't think I could sleep a cent's worth to-night if I couldn't kill at least a dozen," saying which he went on deck, resolved on quietly finding a place of safety.

"Here, Jack, take the wheel," said Tongs. "And, harkey," he added, in a low tone, "if yer don't stand up like a man an' obey orders, I'll show yer up ter the crew an' blow yer head off besides. Mind now."

"Ay, ay, captain. Put me whar the danger's ther greatest an' I'll feel at home," replied Jack, coming happily to the rescue of his own reputation.

Tongs laughed as he proceeded forward with the night-glass to get a better view of the suspicious craft, whose sails now began to show their black reflections in the phosphorescent-lighted water not half a league away.

"Steady all! Lay low an' wait orders!" said he, as he passed the crouching crew. "One man come forward here to heave the lead."

Jim Jackson sprang to obey, and in a few moments reported no bottom.

"All right, then; we're in no danger of grounding. Anybody got a lighted cigar?"

Tom Harding, the second mate, responded with a cigar he was smoking.

"Here you are, captain."

"Good! I axes yer pardon for smokin' it, but I may want it for the gun. Port half a point," he added, calling to Jack Hawser, who now held the wheel, but with rather bad grace.

Old Tongs again directed his glass to the slowly approaching pirate. The same calm had fallen upon them, and the same tide drifting them along, but being a much lighter craft, she possessed every advantage there was to possess, and was slowly creeping to the Yankee Doodle.

A most painful silence hovered over the scene, for nothing save the clicking of the little waves against the hull of the yacht, or the occasional solemn piping of some sea bird who rested upon the water, greeted the anxious ear.

Little by little the suspicious schooner drew upon them, and finally her spars became visible. Then she came near enough for Tongs to see the crowd of men who stood in her waist.

By rights he should have hailed her, but as her lookout must have known that he was gaining on him, and that without showing a light or shouting a signal, he resolved to say nothing, but await events.

Wilson Hardee was crouched among his companions, and encouraging to be firm.

Tongs again walked aft where they were.

"Boys, don't move 'til I tell yer," said he.

"All right," was the low response.

"Does she feel her rudder, Jack?"

"Just a little, sir."

"Let her go!"

"All gone," he replied, as the wheel slowly spun around a few times.

Then Tongs again went forward, greatly to the delight of Jack, who saw that he had a great advantage of shelter in the cock-pit.

By this time the schooner was within short pistol range, and evidently determined to bear down as quietly as possible and board the yacht without giving any alarm. But Tongs had no idea of allowing them to do so. He wanted to put in a little fine work of his own before the desperadoes had a chance to strike a blow, so he hailed:

"Ahoy, there! Do yer want to run us down?" he asked, in Spanish, knowing pretty well that they understood it.

"Schooner ahoy!" was the reply. "Who are you, and where bound?"

"None of your business. Port your helm, or you'll run foul of us," replied Tongs.

"That's just what I intend to do," said a gruff voice, which they knew belonged to the captain.

"The h—l yer do! Yer better try it! Sheer off, will yer?"

A mocking laugh was the only reply, and twenty or thirty savage-looking ruffians appeared on different parts of the vessel, now all visible.

She was just a few yards astern of the yacht, but drifting forward and sideways, so that in a moment more she would be so close alongside that the pirates could leap aboard.

Tongs said no more, but pulling smartly on the cigar, he went forward to the gun. To level it so as to sweep the pirate's deck fore and aft was but the work of a moment, and then applying the lighted cigar to the touch-hole, there was a crashing report that echoed far and wide over the silent sea, instantly followed by yells of anguish and wild consternation on board of the pirate schooner.

"Up an' give it ter 'em, lads!" yelled Tongs, and before the pirates could in any degree recover from their tremendous shock, a dozen revolvers were blazing away at them at scarcely two yards.

The next instant the two vessels collided. Gladly would they have escaped had there been any means of doing so, but knowing that certain death awaited them if captured, the pirate captain seized his cutlass and calling upon what men he had yet remaining to follow him, he leaped on board the yacht.

This pirate chief seemed to be a devil incarnate, and to bear a charmed life, for in the shower of bullets which felled every man who followed closely after him he escaped seemingly unscathed.

Tongs seized a rope, and leaped on board the pirate to secure her capture, while the chief, seeing no hope but in flight, and that towards his own vessel cut off, turned and darted up the ratlines of the yacht with sword between his teeth.

A dozen bullets flew after him, but every aim was bad in the darkness, and so he escaped unharmed and took refuge in the cross-tree of the foremast head.

CHAPTER VIII.

A PERILOUS SITUATION FOR HAWSER.

ON arriving at the foremast head, who should the pirate captain encounter but Jack Hawser, who, during the fight, had somehow managed to get up aloft, probably thinking that the crew would be defeated and driven to the rigging, and that he would be there to protect them.

From the dizzy height he saw, by the flash of firearms, what was going on, and when he beheld the fierce pirate climbing up the ratlines and coming directly upon him, his heart sank within his cowardly carcass.

But like a ship's rat at bay, he now saw that it was a question of life or death. Either the pirate must conquer or he must, and it was a question which was instantly to be decided.

Trembling, and hardly knowing what he did, he blazed away at the pirate with his pistol, but in his excitement, missing his aim, of course.

"Help! help!" he shouted, as the grim rascal approached him nearer. "Here he is, mates, here he is! up aloft with you!"

He had no chance to say anything more just then, for the pirate seized him around the legs, and the life and death struggle begun, Jack all the while yelling for help.

This attracted double attention from those below, of course, some of whom recognized Jack's voice, although utterly unable to understand how he got there. But of course his presence aloft with the pirate prevented them from continuing the firing at him, and in utter amazement they held back and strained their eyes to see what was going on up there, seventy-five feet above their heads.

This hesitation on their parts instantly gave the pirate possession of a desperate idea, and he bent his herculean strength to overmaster Jack Hawser.

But when roused by such a desperate chance as he was now in, Jack was no chicken to a hand-to-hand struggle.

Each grasped the topmast, by twisting his leg around it, and then the struggle for the mastery commenced in deadly earnest.

They struck, gouged and choked, until at length the pirate's superior strength gave him the advantage, and seizing poor Jack by his neck handkerchief, and breaking the hold he had upon him, he swung him clear of the cross-tree and rigging.

"Below there!" he shouted, "fire again and I will fling your mate down upon the deck a dead man!"

"Help—help!" yelled Jack.

By this time two or three of the club had climbed into the mainmast ratlines, and were enabled to see what was going on, and reported to those below; while the pirate still held Jack at arm's length, and, clinging to the mast, seemed ready to drop him below.

Hardee at once comprehended the situation and darted up the shrouds until within ten feet of them.

"Hold! Will you surrender?" he demanded.

"No!" said the pirate, fiercely.

"Well, what are your terms?"

"My life and liberty, or down goes your mate. Speak quick!"

"I agree; release him."

The Samsonian pirate pulled Jack up upon the crosstree, where he instantly seized the topmast with both arms and hugged it with the utmost desperation.

"Come down."

"Do you swear my safety?"

"Yes, come down. Come below, Jack," he added, addressing the poor frightened devil, but he took no notice of the order, and only clung the harder to the mast.

"No, I must go first, for there may be treachery."

"There will be none."

"But I must go first."

"All right; come on," and Hardee ran quickly down the rat-lines, slowly followed by the pirate, who turned at every step almost to look at Jack.

But he had scarcely got a quarter of the way down before Jack recovered himself, and seizing his revolvers again, fired two shots in rapid succession at the descending rascal (as in his excitement he would probably have done had the target been one of his best friends) and with a bound and a maniacal yell the pirate flung himself from the shrouds and fell with a loud splash overboard.

There was instant excitement, of course, and a hundred men ran to the bulwarks to see what had become of the pirate. In fact, in the darkness it was as yet uncertain whether it was the pirate or Jack Hawser who had fallen.

But whoever it was did not appear upon the surface, and the groans and cries of the wounded on the deck of the pirate craft calling loudly for assistance turned attention for a moment.

After doing this almost involuntary deed, Jack Hawser was so overcome for a moment that he nearly fainted, and clung to the main-top straps to keep from falling.

The surgeons leaped on board the piratical craft, followed by three or four of the brave fellows bearing lanterns, for the purpose of dressing wounds they had made, while Tongs and the officers were looking anxiously about in quest of Jack and to see if everything was all right.

The night that had been dark from the first, seemed doubly so now that the battle and the flashes from firearms were all over.

"Forward, there! Set the lights again!" cried Tongs.

"Ay—ay, sir," was the reply.

Tongs put his finger to his mouth, and held it up to see from what direction the little breeze came which he now felt. Then he jumped into the cock-pit and caught the wheel.

"Ease off on the starboard fore and aft," he called, and half a dozen willing hands obeyed the command.

Then he gazed anxiously around to see what the weather indications were, for the yacht's big sails had caught the puff of breeze, and, bringing up to larboard, began to draw and send her ahead.

"Mr. Hardee, bend a cable on the kinghead of that craft, and let her run astern."

"All right, captain," and by this time every person on deck was busy at something.

"Aloft there!" yelled Tongs, with both hands to his mouth.

"Ay—ay!" replied Jack, aroused for the first time from his condition.

"What's the matter? Come below."

"Ay—ay, but are yer sure the devils are all out of the rigging?" he asked, as he began to descend carefully.

"Yes, every devil of 'em. Are you hurt?"

"I can't tell yet, but I have had the devil's own fight. Where is he?" he asked, as he leaped from the bulwarks to the deck.

"Gone to see Davy Jones, I guess."

"That's whar I meant ter send him," said Jack, who was instantly surrounded, and saw at once that fortune had made a hero of him after all.

"But how the devil came you up there?"

"Why, didn't you see me go up?"

"No, hanged if I did," growled Tongs.

"Didn't you, or you? Well, when I saw that devil take ter the fore ratlines, I knowed he meant to be nasty, so I ran up the main, reached the masthead, went hand over fist on the main brace an' reached the main mast-head just as he did. Then the fun began, you bet," said he, with a swagger.

"Whose sword was it that fell down?"

"His'n, of course. He had it in his mouth, an' one of my shoes knocked it out."

"But he had you foul," suggested Hardee.

"How so, sir?"

"He was holding you out at arm's length when I got up there near you."

"I begs pardon, sir, but thar's whar yer are all at sea. It was I as had him."

"How was that? I thought he had you."

"No, I was just goin' ter drop him down on the deck when you came up and opened conversation with him. You see, I war so wind-ed that I couldn't speak, an' so he worked all the gab."

"Well, if that is so, why all right; for I thought he had the advantage of you, and promised him his life on condition of his saving yours. But society hasn't met with a very great loss, at all events," said Hardee.

The yacht was by this time under considerable headway, and the captured pirate was being towed astern.

Old Tongs was somewhat confounded by Jack Hawser's story, knowing full well what a pitiful coward he was, but how to account for the transaction he could hardly see just then.

"Man at the lookout there!" he called.

"Ay—ay, sir."

"Keep a bright eye all around. Some of you heave a lead."

Hardee gave the order to two of the company, and then turned to Tongs.

"How is she steering?"

"South by east."

"Have you any idea where we are?"

"Not much, for that fight knocked the bloody course all out'er my head. But it's lucky that we've only got a hatful of wind. What time is it?"

"Quarter to twelve."

"Good! I guess we'll have a breeze afore daybreak. That cloud off ter ther northard's got a puff or two in it, I guess."

"But what shall we do with our prize?"

"Hold on ter her till morning, if it don't blow. If it does, yer'll have to take a crew an' go aboard of her."

"Guess I'll go over now and see how the surgeons are getting on, and find out what she is like," said Hardee, and calling the second mate and Jack Hawser, they lowered the boat from the stern davits and fell astern in her until the vessel in tow came up to them, when they made the painter fast to the fore-chain, and clambered up on the deck.

What a sight met their gaze!

A dozen dead pirates lay strewn over the deck, while as many wounded ones were moaning in different places, and the two young surgeons were working like beavers to relieve them.

The surgeons were for throwing the dead

overboard, but Hardee resolved to wait until morning to see how soon they could make the nearest port. Then he sent Jack to the wheel while they drew the sails to starboard, so that they might help a little, after which he went down into the cabin to see what further observation he could make.

A light was burning over the table. A dozen articles were strewn around the room, and as he stood gazing at the confusion the moaning of a female voice greeted his ear.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MYSTERY OF THE PIRATE SHIP.

"COME below here, Frank," said Hardee, turning and calling up the companionway to young Fowler, who was assisting the surgeons to bind up the wounds of the pirate crew.

Jack Hawser was at the wheel.

Frank Fowler at once responded.

"There is a female here somewhere," said Hardee. "See if you can find a lamp or candle anywhere," and at the same time he began to look into the cuddles himself in the search.

Evidences of the utmost disorder and an abandoned meal were visible, and again that wail, as if of a female in distress, greeted their ears. Hardee was on the point of pulling down the swinging lamp to use in the search, when Fowler announced that he had found a candle.

To light it was but the work of a moment, and then they began the search.

The pirate was schooner rigged and had a center-board. The main cabin was small, and on the starboard side—going forward—was a door leading into the pantry, while on the other side there was one leading into the small, dingy cabin.

In the pantry they found a Portuguese cook who was crouching in fear.

On the other side in the cabin they found a female in chains, half conscious, and in such a sadly dishevelled state that they could not tell whether she was young or old.

But as that was a matter of secondary consideration, they proceeded to carry her out into the main cabin, and from there up the cabin stairs to the after deck, where they placed her tenderly upon the poop deck.

"Who has got a drop of brandy?" asked Hardee.

"Here you are," said Edmund Chase, the assistant surgeon, going aft. "What's here?"

"A lady, I should say," replied Fowler.

"And a badly used one, too. Quick, give her some brandy."

Her mouth was closed, and from between her clenched teeth a foam was issuing.

To pry them open and pour some brandy down her throat was but the work of a few moments, and while leaving her in the especial charge of young Chase, who, as a physician, was better calculated to take care of her than either of the men, Hardee and Fowler turned their attention to the pirate craft and the wounded wretches who were groaning on the deck.

Young Chase, however, found that the patient left to his charge was the occasion of more anxiety than he at first supposed.

But while his skill was being employed, Hardee and the others were preparing to cast off the line which held the pirate to the yacht Yankee Doodle, for a smart breeze had now sprung up, and the tow interfered with the sailing of the yacht.

"Cast off and follow as close as yer can!" yelled Tongs.

"Ay, ay, but send me a couple more men," said Hardee.

"All right."

In two minutes from that time three of the club went on board, and now being cut adrift they were becoming acquainted with the vessel, and gradually working her up to her best, which was almost equal to their own yacht.

The surgeon, in attending to the wounded pirates, had taken the precaution to disarm them, so that they could do no further harm, for he saw that they were a lot of mongrels, savage as wild beasts, and knew that any one of them that had strength enough would do mischief if he had a chance.

Jack Hawser showed his seamanship at the wheel, and the crew, and even Hardee himself, did not hesitate to obey the orders he gave in working the vessel.

And, oh, how big he felt! Circumstances had made him a hero, even in the face of skulking, and now he was disposed to make

the most of it, as he always was whenever he got an advantage.

And to show off his brief authority he gave any quantity of orders, which kept the boys humming about the schooner at a lively rate.

The lanterns dimly burning in the hands of the surgeon's assistants were all the light they had to see their surroundings, and as the night was exceedingly dark, and there was no certainty of their exact locality, it made the situation anything but pleasant, and the general prayer was for the break of day, some three hours away yet.

Commander Hardee was everywhere, and no one was more anxious than he for daylight to show them their position and the results of their tragic night's work.

The schooner was making very good headway with all her sails set, and Hawser was following as close after the Yankee Doodle as he could, considering the darkness and uncertainty, and the inferior sailing qualities of the captured pirate.

As soon as the wounded men had been attended to, Hardee took one of the lanterns and went aft to see how fared the woman whom he had rescued from the cabin.

Chase had done all he could for her, and placing her in a comfortable position, had left her to regain consciousness by the aid of nature. It was evident that she was greatly exhausted, and as he was not supplied with the proper medicine, he could only minister to her a general way and leave the rest to fortune.

Hardee bent down, and by the light of his lantern gazed into her face. Pale and distorted though it was with pain, he saw that she was not old—not above twenty—that she had regular, even aristocratic, features, and that a wealth of raven hair was her crowning glory.

"Who can she be?" he asked.

"There is some wild romance here," said the surgeon.

"I dare say. Do you think she will recover?"

"Oh, yes, but she has evidently suffered much, and it will take some days before she is really herself again."

"The pirate captain's wife, perhaps."

"No, no, for if she was why was she bound and confined in that loathsome cabin?"

"Heaven only knows what the mystery is. But she can probably unravel it if she ever recovers her senses."

"Oh, such things often occur 'mong pirates," said Jack Hawser, squirting about a pint of tobacco juice to the leeward.

"What do you mean?" asked Hardee.

"Oh, I've had a lot of experience 'mong them pirates, an' I once took one of 'em just as we've taken this, an' on board there was a—"

"Halloo! what's this?" exclaimed Hardee, looking up as a fresh breeze struck them.

"How is she steering?"

"South by east," replied Jack, looking in on the compass card. "Haul in on that jib! Pull taut on that foresail!" he added, in thundering tones, as the breeze struck the schooner.

"Alive there, boys!" cried Hardee, seeing that the order was obeyed. "Halloo! where's the yacht?"

They all strained their eyes, but the Yankee Doodle had vanished from sight as effectually and as suddenly as though the sea had opened and swallowed her up.

The breeze had brought with it a mist that made a veil so impenetrable that no one could see a hundred feet in any direction, and as the only orders they had received from Tongs were to follow as closely as they could, nothing more could be done at present than to keep her on her course.

But there was something strange in the action of the elements, for as the wind increased, so did the darkness. In less than an hour they were obliged to take in the mainsail and put a reef in the foresail on account of the increase of the wind and the little knowledge they had of the vessel they were navigating and the course she was upon. This locality was thickly studded with islands and shoals, and it would be a providential thing indeed if they did not run on some of them before daylight.

And every moment the situation became more hazardous and mysterious. Hardee went forward and hallowed between his hands to see if a reply could be obtained from the yacht. But only an echo answered

him, as though the thick darkness was material enough to send back the sound.

Jack Hawser was naturally one of the most alarmed ones, and he proposed to Hardee to bring the schooner to under bare poles and wait until daylight before venturing further.

But there were objections to this. They were being carried along by a tide almost as fast as by the wind, and the probability was that the yacht was standing right on her course, and in two hours from then, or at daylight, she might so far outsail them as to be out of sight entirely; so it was agreed to keep headway on her and trust to luck.

In the meantime the surgeons had carried the female prisoner into the cabin and made her as comfortable as possible. But she had not yet regained her sanity, and seemed hovering between life and death, with the probability, however, of regaining consciousness far enough to account for herself and give her rescuers a clew for their future action on her behalf.

In spite of the thick atmosphere and the phenomenal darkness, the wind continued to rise until it awakened the most serious apprehensions in the minds of our friends, Jack Hawser, however, pretended to feel perfectly at home, having regained his composure and knowing that he had got to appear brave and indifferent or forfeit what he had so fortunately won.

"What do you think of it, Jack?" asked Hardee.

"Oh, it's all right, I guess," he replied.

"But don't you fear any danger in thus plunging ahead in the darkness?"

"No—we'll fetch all right, I guess."

He would have given all he was worth, or ever expected to be worth, to be well out of the dilemma, but his very brag gave encouragement to the others for the moment, and so the weary hours passed until daylight came to show them their situation.

CHAPTER X.

ALONE ON THE BROAD OCEAN.

BUT what a sight did daylight reveal to them!

Not one of them had slept a wink, and as the dawn crept upon them and the sea became visible, they looked wonderingly into each other's faces as though to seek a solution to the mystery which the light presented to them.

They gazed in every direction, but not a sail was in sight, and not a streak of land. At length, however, Hardee found a telescope, and by its aid they were enabled to see several sails away to the south, but whether the Yankee Doodle was one of them or not they could not make out.

The next thing to do was to take an observation, but they could find no sextant on board and could only guess where they were. They knew only this, that when the night before closed in on them that they were on a fair course for the island of Trinidad, not far from the mouth of the Orinoco River, but being without a chart, and entire strangers to the few points they could make out by the aid of the telescope, they could only guess where they were sailing.

But turning from their search, extending as far as the eye could reach, what a sight met their gaze on the deck of the captured schooner!

The breeze had in the meantime died out to such an extent that every sail had been hoisted again, and even then they were making but little headway; in fact, were drifting faster than they were sailing. But from her cut they concluded that the vessel was no mean sailer, and as daylight enabled them to become acquainted with her, they proceeded to do so.

On the deck amidships lay six or seven of the dead pirates, and thrice that number of wounded, moaning, cursing and glaring upon their captors like so many captured beasts.

Hardee and his companions consulted, after taking it for granted that the Yankee Doodle had in some unexplained manner outsailed them, and had disappeared, perhaps for good.

"A nice fix we are in," said Fowler.

"Yes, and the decks look more like a slaughter house than a yacht," said Albert Matsell, one of the club who had been sent by Tongs to assist in working the prize.

"Well, something must be done right away. These dead bodies cannot lie here in the tropical sun," said Hardee.

By this time the sun had risen out of the

sea, and was darting its burning rays upon the prize.

"One thing is certain; these dead bodies must go overboard," he added.

"Yes, and the sooner the better."

Without further ado all hands set to work to clear up the decks. Some of them went below in search of canvas, in which to sew up the dead bodies before throwing them into the sea, while others assisted the wounded into the forecabin.

This part of the business was the most difficult of all, for it required much hard work and many hard knocks to fully conquer and subdue them, even when they were wounded.

But in the course of half an hour they were all stowed away comfortably, and the dead had been decently buried in the engulfing sea, and with swab and broom the decks were made once more presentable.

Then, while Jack Hawser and four others turned in, Hardee took the wheel and continued the bright lookout, in the hope of discovering some sign of the Yankee Doodle, that seemed to be so completely lost; and during this time, the Portuguese cook, who had been so nearly frightened out of his wits, was brought to understand that something to eat was needed, the result of which was a good breakfast, from the cabin stores, supplied under the supervision of the assistant surgeon, who watched every movement, all the while fearing treachery on the part of everybody connected with the vessel.

As for the cook, there was none of them understood the mongrel language that he spoke any more than they could the mongrel crew who were now in the forecabin, consequently they could get no idea of anything connected with the pirate in any way, and nothing they could find anywhere about her threw any more light upon it.

But they found some ten thousand dollars in gold and silver in an iron-bound chest, in addition to which there were various articles of great value, which had evidently been taken from different vessels which had been plundered. In fact, during the first watch, those who had been detailed for that business, were continually finding wealth, but no clues that could guide them, either in the shape of charts or names.

It was evident that she was a rover, and that anything that could in any way identify her had been destroyed, and that the commander was well enough acquainted with the locality to do without charts.

The sun rose high in the heavens, and shone like a blast of fiery wrath upon the sea. There was no breeze, and the sails hung easily from their holdings, and the peculiar sheen which the sun produced by the glare upon the waters, made it almost as difficult to see beyond a few miles as it would have been in the darkness.

Jack Hawser and the second watch were aroused, and after partaking of breakfast they exchanged places with the first watch, although there was nothing new or favorable to report.

It was mid-summer calm in the tropics, and the most oppressive heat upon earth and sea. Everything seemed dead or sleeping.

When Jack Hawser came up from his breakfast in the cabin, Hardee sent him aloft with the telescope to see if he could get his bearings, or at least see anything of the Yankee Doodle.

But both attempts were in vain, for the yacht was undoubtedly as much "at sea" respecting the pirate schooner as they were regarding her, for the gale during the night, together with the tides, had driven them far apart, and they had separated without the slightest knowledge regarding their positions.

Jack took his position at the wheel again, but with rather a serious look on his weather-beaten face. Again and again did he shield his eyes and strain them to see if he could get a glimpse of anything resembling the Yankee Doodle. But no, and the brown haze which shut them out from each other was just as bewildering to one crew as the other.

"Well, we are in for it, lads," said Hardee, when all prospect of finding out where they were had vanished. "We shall have to take our chances."

He said this bravely, but it was plain to be seen that he felt ill at ease, nevertheless.

"All right. If we are in for it, we are, that's all," said the surgeon.

"That's so. Well, all right, anyway. I've been in tougher places than this," said Jack.

"Oh, we'll come out all right, no doubt about that," replied Hardee. "This craft seems to be a stanch one, and if we do not overhaul the yacht, we can at least soon make a port."

"True, but I don't like the looks of those wounded prisoners in the forecabin," said Chase.

"Why not?"

"I think we had better secure them, for knowing themselves to be outlaws and prisoners, they will attempt any desperation rather than be taken to any port. Hark!"

They all started at the sound of the female prisoner's voice in the cabin, and Hardee, followed by three or four others, hastened down the cabin stairs to learn the cause of it.

They had scarcely reached the bottom of the companionway when they beheld one of the wounded pirates, whom they soon learned to be the first mate of the schooner, struggling with a knife in his uplifted hand to assassinate the female, and who was successfully keeping him from striking her for the moment, owing to his having but one hand that he could use.

Quick as a shot Hardee dealt the scoundrel a blow that sent him doubled up among some rubbish in the cabin, and then kneeling upon him, he called for some cord, and soon had him securely bound.

But this had scarcely been accomplished before they were again startled by Jack Hawser shouting fire, and calling all hands on deck.

Up they flew in the wildest excitement and confusion.

"Forward all hands with buckets, for the schooner's afire," he yelled.

There were no buckets visible, and of course they did not know where to look for them, even if there were any on board, and so the consternation became all the greater.

"Where's the cook? Here, some of you, see that the running gear of that quarter boat is all clear, and stand ready," said Hardee, running forward to ascertain the locality and extent of the fire.

A dense volume of smoke was pouring up the forecabin hatchway, and it was evident that the forward part of the vessel was well afire, and that it was the work of the wounded pirates, a part of the plot being the murder of the strange female, which had been frustrated.

"Below, there!" yelled Hardee.

"Go the devil!" was the only response, and that was made in very bad English.

"Do you mean to burn up?"

A savage, mocking laugh answered him, and he quickly turned away.

"Some hands come below, and let's see if we can find some water and provisions, for we shall have to abandon the vessel," and Hardee plunged into the cabin followed by the others.

About the most piteous thing that was to be seen or could be imagined was the terror-stricken female who stood in the main cabin where they had left her after the rescue. She had caught the ominous sounds, and knew too well that the pirates had executed their threat, and that still greater trouble was yet before her.

"They have fired the vessel?" said she.

"Yes, but never fear; we shall escape, and no further harm shall come to you if we can help it. Do you know where there are any provisions and water?"

"In the pantry," she said, pointing the way, and speaking with a strong Spanish accent.

"Quick, lads, see what you can find; and bring it on deck. Have you any effects, lady, that you want to save?"

She shook her head, and murmured:

"I have nothing but my life."

"Very well, go on deck, please," said he, and turning to the locker where he had discovered the two large bags of gold, he lifted them out, hurried with them on deck, and threw them into the stern of the quarter-boat.

The utmost confusion prevailed, but as all hands were intent on saving their lives, and as the boat was the only means now left them, they worked together pretty well, and soon had it stocked with quite a quantity of provisions, some brandy, and a cask of water, together with the compass and the telescope, and such other things as might be needed or useful.

Meanwhile, to stop the progress of the flames by covering the draught, Jack Hawser

and the surgeon, after exhausting their efforts to get the wounded pirates to come up out of the forecabin, had finally become desperate and battened down the hatch.

But this only made matters worse, for the schooner being opened amidships, presented no partitions or bulkheads to stop the progress of the fire, even for a short time, and before they could get fairly out of the cabin the flames came roaring through, and the entire hull was quickly on fire.

"Steady, now. The lady first," said Hardee, assisting her into the now well-loaded boat. "Now, then, man the tackle. Steady! Lower away!"

The sea being calm, there was no difficulty in lowering the boat into the water, after which the crew lowered themselves into it safely, and bestowed themselves to the best advantage in trimming the boat. Hardee was the last one to leave, and before doing so he ran again to the cabin door and called the cook, who had not shown himself since the alarm.

But there was not a moment to be lost, for the flames were already surging through the schooner from stem to stern, and not knowing how much powder there might be on board, he caught the davit tackle and lowered himself into the boat, which was all ready to be shoved off.

Jack Hawser had one pair of oars, and young Fowler the other; Hardee took a seat in the stern by the side of the young lady, and by the time they got the boat on an even keel, they found that she had even a larger load than she could carry.

"Pull away, lads," said Hardee, grasping the tiller. "The sea is calm, and likely to be for some time yet; so cheerly, ho."

As they pulled away from the vessel, the flames burst out in a dozen places, wrapping her in a mantle of destruction.

CHAPTER XI.

OUT ON THE BOUNDLESS SEA.

So intent were all hands in the boat watching the flames now wrapping the pirate schooner, Don Juan, from keel to truck, they did not give a thought to themselves for a long time.

The men at the oars pulled but lightly, and scarcely a word was spoken during the next half hour, during which time the schooner had become one mass of fire and flame almost to the water's edge.

It was now about one o'clock in the afternoon, and the sun was pouring down with all its tropical fierceness, and as they saw the last spar fall, and complete ruin settle upon the vessel they had so lately abandoned, they began to ponder upon their situation, and to wonder what their fate would be, out at sea in a heavily loaded quarter boat, lost to all the world.

What had become of the Yankee Doodle? Was she also looking for them?

These were questions which they could not help asking, of course, but what was the answer?

Hardee was continually sweeping the horizon with his telescope, but never a sail did it pick up. But what made the situation all the more aggravating was the fact that they supposed themselves to be not far from the island of Trinidad, but whether they were sailing from it or towards it, they had no means of knowing.

Up to this time Hardee had had little or no opportunity of observing the lady whom he had rescued from the pirate schooner, but on turning to her now, after witnessing the destruction of the vessel, he found her quite as composed as any of them.

"I beg pardon for my inattention," said he.

"Don't mention it," said she in broken English. "You have saved my life, and are quite excusable under the circumstances if you did not notice me any further."

The music of her voice had not caught his ear before, and until now he had not noticed how beautiful she was.

"I may have saved you from one danger, but Heaven only knows whether I shall be able to do so in the future," said he sadly.

"You are Americans, are you not?"

"We are."

"Then I will cheerfully take my chances with you," said she, resolutely.

A rousing cheer greeted her reply, and they all felt relieved at the thought of having, after all, a spirited girl instead of a timid one to deal with.

"Thanks for your confidence and good opinion. But will you tell us of yourself, the pirates, and how you came to be in their power?" said Hardee.

"Which way are we steering, cap?" asked Hawser.

"South by west."

"That's good."

"Yes; for if we are out of the course of the island of Trinidad it will certainly take us to the South American coast somewhere."

"Yes, somewhere near the Orinoco river, I should say," replied Jack, after a moment's reflection.

"I beg pardon for the interruption," said Hardee, turning again to the young lady, whose history he was curious to learn.

"You asked me questions of myself and the villains in whose custody you found me?"

"Yes, we would like to know. Who was he?"

"Pedro Belshazer."

"Ah! I have heard of him often," said Jack, resting on his oars.

"For years he has been the terror of trading vessels among the Caribbean Islands, and a price has long been set upon his head. To my father, a rich merchant of Trinidad, he has always shown especial enmity, on account of some love affair years ago, and whenever he could do him an injury he has never failed to do it."

Jack Hawser nodded, understandingly.

"My name is Bianca Gomez, and my father's is Anthon Gomez."

"I have heard of him often," said Jack.

"About a week ago, while out with a number of friends on a yachting excursion, this rascal suddenly swooped down upon our little craft, learned who we were, took me prisoner and sent the others back with word that my father could have me by paying ten thousand dollars ransom. A gale came up soon after and drove us far away, and it was while slowly drifting back that we fell upon you, during which time I was kept in the bondage you found me in."

"Thank Heaven, it was no worse. Now we know exactly what to do, provided we can only get our bearings," said Hardee.

This proviso seemed to fall like a wet blanket upon the crew, and not a word was spoken during the next five minutes.

"Well, one thing is certain," said Halsey, the surgeon, "that wasps' nest of pirates will never do any further harm."

"And I fixed the boss pirate myself," said Jack Hawser, who could blow about his great achievement now as much as he liked.

"That's so, Jack. By the way, are you tired?"

"Well, if somebody'll take these oars for awhile I'll try an' get outside of some grub," said he, and Chase at once volunteered.

Jack's suggestion about grub seemed to interest everybody, and the first pull upon the store of provisions was at once made.

They had a mast and sail on board, but the absence of wind made it entirely valueless, and so they took turns at the oars, keeping straight away south by west, and taking advantage of the current, which was sweeping in that direction.

But night was coming on, and the dread of being out and drifting they knew not where made the situation anything but agreeable. The space between daylight and dark in the tropics is so very short that the sun hardly goes down before darkness follows so fast that strangers are dumfounded.

Hardee still held the tiller and gave directions. Miss Gomez sat by his side, and during the long watches of that night the stories of each other's lives were told, and they became friends—almost lovers. But finally she fell asleep, resting her head on his shoulder, and as the others, with the exception of those at the oars, were asleep, the measured stroke and the "punt" of the oars in the locks was all that broke the solemn stillness.

Jack Hawser fell asleep telling a yarn, and gradually silence, with the exception of the measured stroke of the oars, settled upon the company and everything around.

Morning came, and there was apparently land ahead.

All eyes were strained towards it.

"Oh, I know it," said Miss Gomez. "It is Trinidad."

"Trinidad!" they all exclaimed, and then she proceeded to point out certain points which she recognized.

It was at least twenty miles away.

The break of day produced a change, and a

breeze sprang up. The sail was hoisted, and during the next half hour considerable headway was made, but the breeze freshened to such an extent that a double reef had to be taken in the sail, and finally, as the blow increased, it had to be taken in altogether, and again the boat lay at the mercy of the waves.

The blow increased until positive danger appeared to hover over them. The waves arose and broke around them with angry bellows, and it became a question whether the boat, heavily laden as she was, could live.

Jack Hawser was the most frightened one in the party, but he whistled to keep his courage up, and actually attempted to tell a yarn about adventures he had been in which were a hundred times worse than this.

The waves broke and threw their spray over into the boat, drenching everybody in it, and as they rose higher and higher the view of the land they had seen, lying low on the horizon, was entirely shut out, and it became a question whether they had seen land or not, or whether they had not been deceived by a bank of fog resting upon the water.

Every moment the danger became greater, and it was while all hands were sending up prayers for their safety that a steamer was seen astern of them, bearing straight down toward them, seemingly.

"Look—look! A steamer—a steamer!" exclaimed a dozen voices, and never swept so happy a change over faces so quickly, as they all strained their eyes to get a look at the black hull that was just appearing upon the horizon.

Hardee sighted the telescope and brought it to bear upon the object, while the others shook hands and congratulated each other over the prospect of a speedy rescue.

"She is not coming this way," said he, turning sadly to his companions.

"What! Not coming this way?" and then another change swept over their faces.

"No; she is steaming north by east, and directly away from us."

"It is too bad. But never mind, friends, we cannot be out long without being picked up," said the brave girl.

"I hope so," replied Hardee; "but it doesn't look very hopeful just now, for see!"

They all looked ahead as he pointed, and there beheld the shattering of their last hope. What they had taken for land, and to which they were now headed, proved to be only a dark cloud-bank resting low upon the water, and during the last few minutes it had lifted so that they could now look under it and see the sky beyond.

It was a gloomy prospect. They only knew that there were steering south by west, but where they were they had no means of knowing, or how much further than out of sight of land they were from it.

There was one consolation, the wind was dying out and the waves visibly subsiding. And there was a thick mist in the air which veiled the sun so that much of its blazing fierceness was kept away.

But all day long they sailed and watched for a sail, and night again fell upon them with no prospect of succor.

And to make the prospect still worse, their little stock of provisions was getting low. So low, in fact, that no more than half a meal could be served out to each one of them, and but little more left than would suffice them for another of equal proportion.

But they kept up their courage and still looked and hoped.

All day long they looked and hoped, and night came again. During the day they had seen several vessels far away, but they were all sailing away, and a more miserable crew never floated than they were.

All night long they sailed and drifted away they knew not where, and when morning came there was neither land nor sail in sight. With tired, haggard faces they looked at each other and asked many questions, but all bearing upon the same great subject.

"Lads, I'm sorry to tell you that we have only this little piece of dried beef left, and I propose that we give it to Miss Gomez," said Hardee, holding up about a pound of meat.

"Yes, yes, by all means," said they all.

"No, no, I will not agree to it," said she, resolutely. "I will not taste it unless we all share it alike."

"But we can do without food better than you can," said the surgeon.

"No, I am sure you cannot. At all events I would sooner starve with you all than to eat the last food alone. I am not hungry,

indeed I am not. Divide it among the others."

They attempted to argue her out of the idea, but she was firm in her resolutions, and so the meat was sliced up and divided equally.

Another day went by without seeing a friendly sail. The weather was intensely hot, but the wind kept down so that there was little or no danger from it. There was a long swell on the ocean, but the motion of the little boat was telling upon the young men sadly. In fact, Jack Hawser was the only one who appeared to hold his own in the matter.

That night there was but little sleep by any of them, and the morning found them in a sad plight. Nearly every one of them was sick, and really the only cheering words were spoken by Jack Hawser and Miss Gomez.

Hunger was also beginning to tell upon them, for not a mouthful had they partaken during the last twenty-four hours. Added to this, four of them were already suffering from a high fever, and one or two of them showed signs of delirium, from sickness, hunger and nervous strain, and worst of all, there was no medicine on board.

If assistance did not come soon it was evident that fatal consequences would ensue, and yet there they were on the broad and seemingly boundless ocean, at the mercy of nearly every enemy of life.

CHAPTER XII.

DESPERATION.

A WEEK had passed without seeing a sail or any prospect of escape, and now they were in a very bad plight. Bianca Gomez was sick, half starved, although she tried to appear cheerful, and spoke words of encouragement to her miserable companions.

Wilson Hardee was also prostrated, and, in short, there was no one left to work the boat but Jack Hawser and the surgeon. Two of them were raving maniacs, and had to be bound in the bottom of the boat, to prevent them from doing injury to themselves or the others, and their wild ravings added terror to the situation, until it seemed as if they would be driven mad.

"Something must be done," said the surgeon. "There is no use of our all starving to death."

There was a wild significance in his voice and the expression of his haggard face.

"What do you mean?" asked Hardee faintly. "Simply this; the flesh of one of us will save the lives of the rest."

They all exchanged horrified glances.

"I am willing to take my chance with the others, and draw lots to see which one shall be killed for food."

Under ordinary circumstances such a horrible proposition would have been revolting to the highest degree, but now, with starvation and death staring them in the face, the only one to protest was Bianca Gomez.

"No, no, in Heaven's name do not think of such a terrible thing," said she. "God will surely rescue us from our unhappy positions if we do not tempt Him with such a dreadful thing as that."

"Heaven helps those who help themselves," returned the surgeon savagely.

"Miss Gomez, it is dreadful, but life is very dear, you know," said Hardee, who had roused up at the proposition; "you shall not run any risk."

"Yes, she shall," said Chase; "her life is no better than ours."

"That's so," said Jack Hawser.

The truth was, they had all lost their manhood now, and were more like wild beasts than human beings.

"She shall not, I say."

"Yes—yes. She shall take her chance."

"Then you will have to fight me."

"You?" they sneered.

"Hold, friends, for the love of God, do not do this dreadful thing," said she, imploringly.

"Yes—yes, let's draw lots," said they all.

"Then if you must, I will take my chance with the others," said she boldly.

"Never; you shall not," replied Hardee.

"Peace. Heaven will never allow such a dreadful thing to be consummated. Proceed with the drawings," said she, earnestly.

The surgeon took his knife and cut a few matches to different lengths.

"How shall it be?" demanded Jack.

"Why, the one who gets the shortest stick

must die, that's all, and here is one for each person in the boat."

"But how about these poor devils?" he asked, pointing to the wretches who were bound.

"Oh, they must draw, too."

"But they cannot."

"Then I will draw for them, and if they get the shortest, either one of them, they must die to save the rest of us."

"Gentlemen, this must not be, or at least let us have manhood enough among us not to include this poor young lady," said Hardee, appealingly.

"Oh, that be hanged. She is no better than I am," said Fuller.

"Then I will take her chance as well as my own."

"No, you won't. This thing has got to be conducted fair. She must draw for herself," replied the surgeon.

"I protest."

"In vain."

"Then I command," said he, fiercely.

A derisive laugh was his reply.

"We have no commander now but fate—remember that."

"Then let fate decide between you and I first."

"How?"

"This," said Hardee, drawing a knife.

"No, no, please don't," said Bianca.

"I am ready."

"But I am not. We have agreed to this drawing, and if you are a man you will not try to back out of it."

"That I am not doing, sir, and if you say so you are a liar. I even offer to take two chances to your one, provided you excuse Miss Gomez."

"Which we refuse to do."

"Then I refuse to submit, and will fight to the very last."

"Let us have no love or sentiment here."

"No, no," said Jack Hawser, whom hunger had transformed into a ferocious beast.

"Well, I plant myself in front of her and defy you all with the little strength I have left," said Hardee, brandishing his knife.

In an instant half a dozen knives were gleaming in the sunlight.

Bianca Gomez threw herself between them imploringly.

"Oh, gentlemen, men, brothers, Americans, in the name of Heaven do not. Hunger has made you all mad. You are not yourselves at all. God pity us all. Put up your knives and slay me. I will willingly die rather than live to behold such a scene as this. Slay me, please do," and she bared her white neck as she spoke.

But this cowed them only for a moment.

"Well, let's kill her," said Chase.

"You will have to kill me first," said Hardee.

"We can do that too if you interfere," replied Surgeon Halsey.

"Try it first."

"Well, I will try it," said Halsey, and springing from his seat, he leaped toward Hardee, who stood erect to receive him.

The onslaught was so fierce that Hardee could not stand up against it, and the result was that they both fell into the water together, struggling to cut each other with their knives.

They arose to the surface of the water and began a most ferocious combat, while the others leaned over and watched them.

Bianca Gomez fell over in a swoon, and for a moment all thoughts of hunger were forgotten in the presence of the sanguinary contest that was taken place.

First one and then the other would strike, but they were both so weak that they could do but little damage, especially in the water, but by the unnatural fire that gleamed in their eyes as they sustained themselves and continued to fight for life or death, it was plain to be seen that one or the other of them must die before the contest would cease.

CHAPTER XIII.

A SAIL—A SAIL.

"A SAIL—a sail," shouted Jack Hawser, who with the others had been watching the strange duel in the water between Wilson Hardee and Surgeon Halsey, and instantly all eyes were turned from the combatants and beheld a steamer bearing straight down for them.

"A sail—a sail," shouted half a dozen

feeble voices, and Bianca Gomez aroused from the swoon into which she had fallen.

"Stop the fight! There is help at hand."

But there was hardly any necessity of stopping the fight, for both of the men were so nearly exhausted by starvation before they had fallen into the water, that they could scarcely lift a hand against each other, and were even now on the point of sinking.

"Thank God, my prayer is heard!" said Bianca, fervently. "Save them!"

The others caught hold of the two men in the water, but had hardly strength enough to hold them up so they might not drown, and they then turned their attention to the steamer-ship that was quickly approaching.

She seemed like a large propeller, but as she was coming head on they could get but a dim idea of her dimensions. But they cared not. Help was at hand, and that was enough to drive them almost delirious with joy. They stood up in the boat and made frantic signals to those on board, laughing and crying by turns like so many maniacs.

They could see that it was the intention to rescue them, of course, but the minutes seemed like hours. Finally the ponderous ship slowed up, and a boat was lowered from her port davit, manned by three or four sailors and the second mate.

"Can't you row up alongside?" shouted the captain, who was standing on the bridge.

There wasn't voice enough in any of them to reply, but they partially succeeded in making their helplessness known by gesture, and with a few lusty strokes the steamer boat was alongside of them.

"Pull these poor men out of the water first," said the heroic girl.

"All right, mum, we'll soon have 'em out of the brine," replied the officer, and two stalwart sailors seized and pulled them into the boat, where they lay in an exhausted and almost helpless condition.

"What happened you?"

"We've been more than a week in this open boat. That is enough to tell you now. Take us in tow, for we haven't any strength left," said Chase.

"Ay, ay—hungry, starving, wrecked—I understand. Put your grapple on her bow there, Nick, and we'll soon have them on board alive and kicking."

"Thank God!" they exclaimed, as they felt themselves being towed towards the steamer, which in the meantime had drifted slowly towards them.

The boat was taken up by the davit tackle, and in a few moments the company of sufferers were received on board, and handed over to the surgeon of the steamer, who at once, with such assistance as the officers lent him, set about ministering to their necessities, which were very great.

The steamer continued on her course and speculation ran high among the officers and crew regarding who the castaways were, but it was not until the following day that one of them had rallied sufficiently to give an account of themselves.

In this case it was Jack Hawser. He had suffered dreadfully, but his strong constitution and the many hardships he had before endured made him less a victim to what transpired than the others. A little brandy and other nourishment soon had him on his legs again, although the condition of some of the others was almost hopeless, three or four of them being still flighty and out of their minds.

Bianca Gomez, strange as it may appear, was next to Jack in rallying from the effect of her suffering, and her first anxiety was for Wilson Hardee; but the surgeon refused to let her see him, pacifying her with assurances that he was slowly recovering.

"We're part of a yacht crew belonging to the Yankee Doodle, hailing from New York, an' bound 'round the world on a pleasure cruise," said Jack, in answer to the captain's question regarding who they were.

"Part of the crew! Where are the others—drowned?" he asked.

"I hope not, cap'n," and then he proceeded to tell the story of the attack of the pirate, the drifting apart of the two vessels, and the tragic events following it.

"Why, this pirate—where is he? He is the very rascal we are looking for," said the captain, excitedly.

Jack explained how he had slain him in the battle, and you may rest assured that he made a highly dramatic narration of it, and constituted himself the hero.

"But this lady—where did you find her, and who is she?"

"She says her name is Bianca Gomez."

"What!"

"An' that she was the pirate's prisoner at the time we captured him—"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the captain, breaking in upon his narration and starting hastily for the cabin where she was.

The truth of the affair was soon unfolded. She was indeed what she had claimed to be, and in reply to the message that the pirate had sent to her father, that he could ransom her for ten thousand dollars, the old merchant had dispatched one of his swiftest steamers in search of the pirate, bearing at the same time the ransom in gold.

The story was a romance of the wildest order, and it was only a few moments before it spread all over the ship, causing great rejoicings; and coming slowly about, the course was at once laid for the island of Trinidad, nearly two hundred miles northwest.

It appeared that they had been borne by a current of the Gulf Stream far out to sea and past Trinidad, out of the usual course of vessels, and had succor not come in this unexpected manner, they would have been carried still further away and lost beyond a doubt.

Great were the rejoicings among the yachtsmen as they one by one became strong enough to bear the good news, and Jack Hawser talked himself down to a whisper telling the crew of the ship about their perilous voyage, and what a hero he had figured in it. Again, as before, he had no one to dispute his yarn, and was regarded by all as one of the greatest heroes alive, although it must be admitted that Jack behaved very well under the circumstances all through.

The next day they sailed into the harbor of Port of Spain, the principal one belonging to the British Island of Trinidad. The vessel was trimmed with flags from stem to stern as a signal of the fortune that had attended her cruise, and of the good news she bore of the death of the piratical scourge of the Caribbean Sea.

A right royal reception awaited them, and the old merchant showered blessings and presents upon the bold crew, and promised that the home government should reward them as well. He took them all to his mansion just out of the town, where nothing that wealth could procure was wanting for their comfort and restoration.

But that restoration, of course, came slowly to many of them, while all that passed during those dreadful hours now seemed like a dream, a frightful one, it is true, but to them all it was now only remembered as one in which they had suffered untold agony.

But where was the Yankee Doodle? Was she lost? Could it be possible that she had continued her course without them?

These were questions which would force themselves forward for answers, and although Mr. Gomez offered to send them back to New York in his steamer free of all charge, they did not relish the idea of accepting such an offer until they had solved the mystery of the yacht.

Finally it was agreed that the steamer should again be sent out to cruise all around the island and see if any tidings could be obtained of her, for it was the general opinion among sea captains that she had got caught in some of the little cyclones which spring up so suddenly in the tropics, and which cover such a small space of territory, and driven into some of the many coves and ports with which the islands abound.

Accordingly preparations were made, and the beautiful Bianca Gomez insisted upon going along with them, in company with the very friends who were with her on the yachting excursion when the pirate had captured them, and although the Yankee boys felt in no joyous mood going upon such an errand, yet the whole cruise and company resembled a pleasure party more than it did anything else.

It is needless to say that a feeling stronger than friendship sprang up between Wilson Hardee and Bianca Gomez, and that arrangements and promises for the future were made. But notwithstanding the great admiration which he had for the brave and beautiful girl, he felt that it was no time for love-making then.

Where was the yacht Yankee Doodle and the remainder of her once joyous crew?

A bridge lookout was kept as the vessel steamed around that beautiful, tropical, ver-

dured island, but as yet no sign of her, either in safety or as a wreck, could be made out.

Finally every cove and port but one had been visited without result.

This was an entry port on the northwest side of the island, known as Dragon's Head. It is one of the most dangerous ones in the world, unless the navigator is perfectly well acquainted with its intricate channels, and so the captain proceeded cautiously.

But on rounding a headland, their eyes were treated to a sight that they never forgot.

There lay the Yankee Doodle, at anchor, her foremast and bowsprit gone, and looking as if she had experienced rough usage. The steamer was slowed up, and in a few moments there was a joyous exchange of salutations.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RE-UNITED CREW.

It would take three or four chapters in print to tell all that was said, when the long separated crew stood grasping each other's hands on the deck of the Yankee Doodle. Suffice it to say that during the night of the battle, a breeze, light at first, had sprung up, driving the yacht before it, and finally increasing to a tornado, dismasting her as she then was, but finally driving her into the dangerous cove, where her anchors found bottom, and secured her from further danger. Here they had been waiting all this time in the hopes of finding some means of communicating with the Port of Spain, and doing what they could to make good the damage they had suffered.

She was at once taken in tow by the steamer, and started for the Port of Spain for repairs, and during the trip they exchanged their sensational stories and thanked Heaven for their re-union.

On arriving in port, she was at once placed in the hands of the ship carpenters, while the crew received the hospitalities of the town. But these were carried to such an extent that every one of the young fellows forgot the dangers and sufferings past, and felt amply repaid for them. Even Chin-Chin, the cook, found a few of his countrymen there, and became a hero among them.

At the end of a fortnight the entire crew had recovered both health and spirits, and when the Yankee Doodle was once more ready for sea, the government not only assumed all the cost of the repairs, but allowed them to keep the gold which they had taken from the pirate, and Mr. Gomez presented them with ten thousand dollars which he had sent as a ransom for his daughter.

The day of sailing was a gala one in the town, and hundreds of merchants and natives gathered on the wharves to see the beautiful yacht spread her white wings and glide out of the harbor gracefully as some huge sea gull. There was a little breeze and soon they were far away, taking with them the good wishes of all and the love of many.

For the next five or six days they had a fine wind from the north, which not only tempered the tropical heat but sped them along down the coast at a clipping rate.

Finally they arrived at the mouth of the Amazon river, the largest and most important in the world, and as it had originally been agreed upon to sail up it a few hundred miles, they at once proceeded to do so.

And what a wonderful stream this is! being navigable for nearly three thousand miles from its mouth, and with an average width in Brazil of four miles. Think of that for a river, and you can understand that our friends hardly knew for the first week whether they had left the ocean or not.

The wonderful tropical verdure—the beautifully plumaged birds—the flocks of chattering parrots and droves of monkeys—the wild beasts and huge snakes with which the shores were inhabited, made it seem indeed like wonder-land, and tempted them often to cast anchor for the purpose of going ashore, either to hunt the abundant game or to engage in some wild adventure.

It was on one of these occasions, when about three hundred miles up the river, that a party of ten were ashore for the purpose of hunting the abundant game and collecting rare specimens of a hundred things, that they suddenly found themselves in a labyrinth of trees, growing so thickly together that their branches were interlocked, added to which was their abundant foliage, and the climbing vines with their highly colored flowers and

leaves which helped fill up every space until the light of day was almost completely shut out.

It was at once a forest and a bower fit for the goddess of flowers herself, and completely enraptured with the marvelous beauties that met them whichever way they looked, they did not notice how far they were penetrating into this magnificent jungle until they were suddenly startled by an ominous hissing, and on turning in the direction from whence it came, they saw the hideous proportions of a huge boa constrictor coiled around the trunk and among the branches of a flowering cotton-wood tree.

For a moment they were all paralyzed, the fierce eyes of the monster devil being full upon them, and naturally they huddled close together as if for protection or defense.

"Hold on, boys, we must have that fellow's skin, at all events," said Surgeon Halsey, the first to recover from the general stupor, and with his own half a dozen other rifles were raised to cover the monster.

Every ball took effect, and before the echoes had died away, the boa constrictor had lost its hold, and came sliding and tumbling down into the almost impenetrable undergrowth.

But the report of their rifles seemed to arouse a hundred sluggish enemies (for a life of utter sluggishness seems to possess every living thing in these tropical wilds), and instantly there came hissing sounds from a dozen directions above their heads.

By this they knew that the trees were peopled by these slimy terrors, and understanding that their mode of attack was darting from a tree upon their prey, it is not to be wondered at that they started to beat a hasty retreat.

But in addition to these hissing sounds which their presence had awakened, they now heard the cry of the cougar—Brazilian wolf—and the screaming of innumerable apes, together with the chatter of monkeys and parrots, and the wild scream of a dozen different species of birds and smaller animals.

It seemed as though pandemonium had suddenly been started into action. The hissing of huge serpents and the angry growl of fierce beasts seem to greet them from every side as they cautiously worked their way towards the river.

Harry White and Tom Harding were in advance, and while working their way through the tangled undergrowth, full of flowers and poisonous thorns, a huge Brazilian tiger sprang from somewhere above them, and landed upon Harry, forcing him to the earth, and fastening his large claws into his flesh.

Tom Harding saw that his friend's life was in danger, and quickly drawing his revolver, he sprang forward, and placing it close to the monster's eyes, fired.

And he did so none too quickly, for his huge mouth was already opened, and about to seize Harry's neck in its fatal grip. But that discharge and the two others which quickly followed it stretched the monarch of the jungle upon the earth.

Scarcely, however, had they recovered from their natural excitement, and Harry had struggled to his feet, before they were again startled by cries from those behind, and on turning back they saw Lou Felton and Ned Van Eyck engaged and about to be overcome by another of the furious beasts, while a short distance away, though out of sight on account of the thick underbrush, there was another life and death struggle going on, mingled with cries and the reports of firearms.

One of the tigers had leaped from a tree upon Joe Bleecker, and had knocked him senseless. His friends went quickly to the rescue, however, and saved his life, although he was badly hurt by the fall and the claws of the tiger.

Others rallied to the assistance of Felton and Van Eyck, the latter of whom received a severe scalp wound and a dislocated shoulder, and by a liberal discharge of rifle and pistol shots the tigers were all slain, although not without first doing considerable damage to the party.

"Oh, there's lots of game here," said George Billings, whose spirits seemed to be always high.

"Yes, a confounded sight too much," said Neil Vanderpool. "Let us get out of this. I like to see my game before it sees me."

"All right; so do I, but I am not going without my bird," said Harry White, returning to the tiger he had slain.

"Nor I, nor any of us. But confound this jungle, it is altogether too populous."

"Ah, don't do that," exclaimed Halsey, as Felton drew up his rifle to fire at a monkey. "If you shoot one of those ringtailed devils we shall have ten thousand of them screaming and chattering around us in less than five minutes. Come, let's get our game down to the boat."

"No, let's skin them."

"What! Here? Not much. All the devils out of hades would be upon us before we could accomplish it. No. Catch them by the tail and hind legs and drag them along the best way you can; that's the only way."

"That's so," was the response, and at it they went, stopping, however, every now and then as they dragged their heavy burdens along to fight off some new enemy that suddenly confronted them.

Surgeon Halsey was determined upon securing the body of a boa constrictor, and in endeavoring to do so he took several desperate chances wholly independent of his companions.

In the meantime the others had reached the river with their huge game, and after considerable trouble the boat was found and loaded with the carcasses, after which four of them pulled off for the yacht, leaving the others until they could return for them.

But it was now nearly sunset, and knowing that only a few moments of daylight remained afterwards, they of course became anxious regarding the whereabouts of Halsey.

They fired guns and called several times without receiving any reply, and finally, just as the sun was setting, they formed a party and made a dash into the thick undergrowth which lined the bank of the river.

But they had scarcely reached the plateau when they came upon him, dragging the body of a huge boa constrictor, the one, in fact, that they had killed at first, and which he had set his mind upon securing.

They tried to persuade him not to take the huge reptile on board, but he had set his heart upon it, and so they humored him and lent their assistance.

It was nearly dark when they reached the yacht, and in the north there hung a suspiciously black cloud that foretold trouble, and upon which Captain Tongs was bending his observations.

The tigers lay stretched upon the deck, and when the huge boa constrictor was pulled aboard and coiled around them, Chin-Chin, the cook, stood perfectly amazed.

"Heap big worm!" said he, at length, at which the company nodded.

"Makee soupee?" he asked, seeing that nobody suggested the use to which it was to be put.

"Forward, there, quick; lower the jib, foresail, and mainsail. Make all fast and snug!" shouted Captain Tongs, excitedly.

CHAPTER XV.

AGAIN AWAY ON THE BOUNDING SEA.

THE order which Captain Tongs gave in such rapid tones was neither given or executed too quickly, for scarcely had the sails been taken in before one of those dreaded tropical squalls was upon them in all its fury.

Rain, wind, thunder and lightning played havoc with everything during the next half hour, but the anchors of the Yankee Doodle held fast, and the elements warred upon her in vain.

By eight o'clock the moon was high enough to shed her silvery grandeur upon the scene, and danger being past, the members of the yacht club gathered around the bodies of their victims to tell over again the stories of their battles with them.

After continuing their journey three or four hundred miles further up the Amazon, they put about and sailed again for the open sea, and for a continuation of their trip around the world.

It was a lazy sail, there being but little wind most of the time until they reached the mouth of the river, and beyond taking care of their prizes and securing the skins of their captured game, the members had but little else to do than to tell stories, sing songs, and have a good time generally.

Jack Hawser was, of course, a hero at every point, and while they were sailing down the South American coast towards Rio Janeiro, he was continually regaling the crew with his experience on land and sea, and from the pirate, which he had at first represented

himself to be, to the hero which they had learned him to be, as they thought, he could always command a crowd of listeners.

They had escaped the dangerous tides and winds always to be met with at the mouth of the Amazon, and were making splendid headway down the coast with little or nothing to do, and therefore one of Jack's yarns may not be out of place at this point.

"Tork about yer game," said he. "Why, when I was a-sailin' on the Robin Hood, we anchored off the coast of Venezuela onct, on account of there bein' no wind, an' a lot of us went ashore in the captain's jolly boat, ter have some shootin'. Shootin'! Yer was torkin' about game and about shootin'. Why, say, you chaps don't know nothin' 'bout it; never had a chance ter see what shootin' was."

"Well, tell us about it, Jack," said they.

"Wal, only tew begin with, I wants you tew understand as how I've been knockin' 'round this way all my life, an' had lots of 'sperience afore any of you were born."

"Oh, that's all right, we understand it!" said the second mate.

"Let me see, what war I a sayin'?" said he, after taking a huge quid of tobacco.

"You were speaking about game."

"Oh, yes, and this puts me in mind of an eel story, a true bile that happened right here in this Amazon river, 'bout ten years ago."

"All right, give us the eel story first."

"Wal, this story is so tough that you young sailors mout not be able to stow it away."

"Oh, go ahead, we'll take it all in."

"But it's gospil, mind you."

"Oh, certainly."

"An' if you'd only been 'round as much as I have been, you'd have seen such things."

"Of course, go ahead."

There was about a dozen of the young fellows around, and although some of them regarded him as the boss liar, yet he told his stories with so much vim, and swore to them with such an honest face, that they could scarcely find it in their hearts to doubt him, and now they were hungry for almost anything in the shape of entertainment.

"Wal, maybe you'll think it arn't much of a story, but there's Cap'n Tongs and here's Chin-Chin, the cook, as will anchor right fer what I'm goin' ter tell. We war layin' at anchor in the mouth of ther Amazon on board the Robin Hood, havin' been driven in by a hurricane—yer remember that time, Chin-Chin?" said he, appealing to the Chinese cook, who stood a few feet away listening.

"So be, allee samie blig blow, me yes," replied Chin-Chin, although he knew very well that Jack was about to tell a whopper, felt just like listening to it, and so he gave it as good a send off as he could.

The boys looked sober and believing.

"Wal, we run short o' fresh provisions, an' the cap'n concluded to let all hands try their luck at fishin'. Says he to me:

"Jack, if thar's anybody aboard that's got luck, it's you, so you take a line off ther stern an' see what yer git."

"Yer remember that, Chin-Chin?"

"So be, alle sklare," replied he meekly.

"Wal, I baited a big shark hook with a piece of salt pork an' chucked it over the stern, an' let it run out three or four fathoms. We fished an' fished, but nobody got a bite, 'cept from those cussed flies that swarm all round the river, an' ther cap'n he began ter get sick an' think ther warn't nothin' fresh ter be had, when I felt a bite. I pulled hard and found myself fast on somethin' big. I pulled an' pulled, but whatever I had on that hook war too much fer me. Ther cap'n came ter bear a hand, an' we both pulled; but whatever it war we could only get it up a few yards when it would get away, an' the line would play out in spite of us."

"Take a turn 'round the capstan," said the cap'n, as we ran forward with the line an' got it turned 'round the capstan. 'All hands forward to heave on the capstans,' shouted he, an' in less'n no time five strong fellows had manned the hand-spikes. You remember it, don't yer, Chin-Chin?"

"Me, yes. Allee same likee you."

"Wal, 'round an' 'round went that thar capstan, the men goin' on ther trot, an' bimeby we seed the head of a big eel comin' up out o' the water. That tickled the cap'n awfully. 'Now then for fresh fish,' said he. 'Send her 'round, my hearties!' I tell yer it war tough on that shark line. But it held until we got that eel's head up over the rail, when we took a slip

noose in a larger rope, an' after puttin' three extra men at the capstan, we managed ter get 'bout fifty feet of that ther eel on board."

"Oh, what are you giving us?" asked several, who had taken in all they could stand.

"What! Do yer doubt my truthfulness?" asked Jack, savagely. "Ain't that so, Chin-Chin?"

"Allee samee, fifty fleet, so be, shure plop," replied Chin-Chin, soberly.

This paralyzed his listeners.

"Wal, seein' as how yer inclined to doubt my word, I'll cut my story short."

"Oh, go ahead, give us all of it."

"All right, but when I'm torkin' gospil, I don't like to be larfed at. But, as I was a-sayin', we got aboard about fifty feet of that thar eel, when the cap'n said: 'Belay. Take a fresh turn 'round ther critter, just over the rail.' An' then we cut off the fifty feet an' dressed it, holding ther rest of it by the bight, ter pull in when we wanted it. Chin Chin cooked it, and knows that it's real gospil I'm torkin'. Wal, we lay becalmed thar for a week, an' every day we'd pull in a few yards o' that thar eel, an' it was alive and kickin' all ther while. At length thar came a favorin' breeze, and we set sail for ther ocean again, towin' ther remainder of that thar eel until we had got clear down to Rio, an' then we were obliged ter cut it adrift, havin' got tired of so much fresh fish, and let go without ever seein' the tail of that thar eel."

A loud laugh greeted the finish of the story, and then each listener got up, shook hands solemnly with the narrator, and went down into the cabin without further comment. Even Chin-Chin deserted him, and disappeared down the scuttle into the kitchen, exclaiming: "Hellee damee. Bloss liar, so be."

"Thunder and tar!" exclaimed Jack, looking around and seeing nobody within hearing on the lookout away forward. "I've got ter kill three or four of these fresh water gillies afore they'll learn manners."

But the lookout paid no attention to what he said, and finally he went into the fore-castle to his bunk and turned in.

A week's good run took them to the mouth of the harbor of Rio De Janeiro, one of the most beautiful entry ports in the world, and the American ensign at the main guaranteed them an unchallenged pass by the forts which guard the entrance to the harbor, and the next morning they awoke to be enchanted by the most beautiful sights under the sun.

To give the reader even a poor idea of the beautiful city of Rio De Janeiro would take up more space than a story of this kind will warrant. Of course we can only pay flying visits to places on the route, for even now we have scarcely got an eight part of our journey around the world behind us, and of course we must press onward.

Suffice it to say that the city is the largest in South America; is the capital of Brazil, and one of the most beautiful in all respects in the whole world.

Several of the club went ashore and spent two or three days in visiting various points of interest in and around the city, and they not only enjoyed themselves to their fullest bent, but they had three or four amusing adventures which served for talking material during the next few weeks.

Even Chin-Chin, going ashore for some provisions, had an adventure. A fruit dealer attempted to cheat him in a purchase, and Chin-Chin at once proclaimed himself an American and wanted to fight for the insulted Stars and Stripes, seeing which and knowing in what high respect the Americans were held by the government, he at once "weakened," and in order to propitiate the wounded Yankee honor he offered to give the fruit to him for nothing.

And Chin-Chin accepted the apology; he was just that kind of an American, and the money which the purser had given him to make the purchase he put in his pocket with a grin that was child-like and bland.

And then he proceeded to invest it in gin; or, as he called it, "ginnie," on which he became exceedingly hilarious and demonstrative.

While all this was going on, the officers of the Yankee Yacht Club were paying their respects to the Emperor of Brazil, who received them with all the honors, not only because they were young Americans, but because they were the representatives of so many colleges, he being a great patron of science, art, and education. In fact, he did them the honor to

invite them to dine with him, promising to visit the Yankee Doodle the following day.

In the meantime Chin-Chin had got most gloriously drunk, and when an officer of the peace attempted to arrest him, he made a national kick, and created a great disturbance.

"Heap helle dlamnation; me Melican; me knocklee stuffin lout eblybloody, so be. Too flesh, 'round Melican. Me bling heap ship, knockee blazes lout Blazil, betee you. Me big Lankee, bloss Lankee Dloodle, so be, eby time," said he.

Strange as it may appear, the Brazilian officer of the peace weakened before his big assertions, and allowed him to go. But this made him all the more saucy, and in less than half an hour he was feeling big and strong and American enough to attempt to thrash two other officers who had the cheek to interfere with his sport of kicking the insides out of a fishmonger's stall, scattering the fish all round, and raising the deuce generally.

By this time his Americanism failed to go down, although he threatened them with all sorts of warlike visitations from his government, and so he was overpowered and locked up. But it so happened that some of the high state dignitaries of the empire were showing the members of the club through the different institutions, and came upon Chin-Chin in durance vile.

Of course their surprise was quite as great as his own, but after a short explanation he was set at liberty, and started for the yacht in company with the assistant surgeon.

But it made him feel a bigger Melican man than ever. Had he not been held well in check he would have got into half a dozen other rows before he got to the dock where his boat lay, just to show off American prowess.

CHAPTER XVI.

ROUNDING ROUGH CAPE HORN.

THE next day the Emperor of Brazil and his suite paid a visit to the Yankee Doodle, where they were received with all the honors, of course, and with the out-going tide, favored by an evening breeze, they weighed anchor and set sail to continue their journey.

Their next stopping place was Montevideo, and from there to the Rio de la Plata, stopping only a short time in either place, and then on to Falkland.

These short stops interfered but little with the splendid time they were making, for with favoring winds the yacht was making steamer's time, and in three weeks after leaving Rio de Janeiro they were standing close upon that most dreaded of all points to the mariner, Cape Horn.

The land of Terra del Fuego (the land of fire), at the extreme southern limit of South America, is one of the most desolate portions of the world. The cliffs, mountains and crags are perpetually covered with snow, the lowlands producing but sparsely the rudest vegetation. It is even more desolate and uninviting than are the icy wilds of Greenland.

To add to all this, the cold is most intense, and the wind of the most violent and opposite character, although they sometimes blow for six weeks in one direction, whether it be favorable or otherwise to the mariner who is trying to double the cape and get into the more congenial waters of the broad Pacific.

It so happened on this occasion that a gale was blowing from the west, right from the Straits of Magellan, and old Captain Tongs, who had doubled the Horn a dozen times in his life, knew that they had no boy's play before them.

But, like all the other good sailors, he was bound to make the attempt to get around, and so with sails all double reefed, and everything made snug and taut for the roughest kind of experience, he started into the blast which swept around the cape, to battle with it for the mastery.

Jack Hawser was also a veteran at this rough experience of "doubling the Horn," and so Tongs placed him temporarily second in command, with the understanding that he was to go aloft or do anything else which the inexperience of the yacht's crew might fail in.

This swelled him up like a toad-fish, and the way he did put those poor fellows through, while Tongs clung to the wheel, was a caution. In fact, he gave any number of unnecessary orders during the first day, and had it not been for Tongs he would have given

them such an experience as sailors seldom have.

But the first day's battle was fruitless, for after tacking and bearing for ten hours, and making but two or three miles headway, the wind increased, and they were driven at a fearful rate backwards for at least fifty miles.

The next day they tried it again with but little better success, and, in fact, for five days they battled with head winds, gaining a little now and then, but being blown still further away at every attempt.

But on the sixth day the fury of the wind abated somewhat, and they managed to get far enough around the cape to hold their grip, as Tongs expressed it, and finally made their way into the Straits of Magellan, and at once laid their course southward, up the coast of South America and into the brighter and calmer waters of the Pacific Ocean.

The change from intense heat to intense cold in sailing from the tropics on the eastern coast of South America was now about to be repeated in reverse as they again sailed towards the equator on the Pacific coast. But they had ample clothing for all changes.

A week's sail took them to about latitude fifty degrees, longitude eighty, and then the distant peaks of the Patagonian Andes came into view over the many islands which stand like sentinels all along the coast for a thousand miles, and in another week they had reached latitude forty degrees on nearly the same parallel.

Their first stopping-place, where they lay for any length of time, was at Santiago, Chili, where they put in for provisions and water, and also some additional charts for the new course they had agreed upon.

It was here, after their most arduous cruise from Rio de Janeiro around the Horn to Santiago, that the whole crew went ashore for frolic and observation; and fun and adventure they had, indeed. The officers sought the authorities, and were well received by them, while the frolicsome and jolly ones were taking in all the hurrah they could find.

The yacht lay off from the shore about a mile, the harbor not being well provided with wharf accommodations; but the natives kept up constant and frequent communications with them, bringing everything on board to sell; and, taken altogether, their stay at Santiago was delightful in the extreme.

It was while laying off Santiago that the crew had an adventure which they will never forget.

It was on a pleasant afternoon, after they had been there three or four days, that the event transpired. Jack Hawser was telling one of his long yarns, and had got the eyes of his listeners sticking out like door knobs, when there was a tremendous commotion in the water about a quarter of a mile away, shoreward.

"What is it?" was the general inquiry.

"It's a devil," said Jack.

"A what?"

"A bat-winged devil fish."

"Ah, I have read of them. Let's try and capture it," said Surgeon Halsey.

This being instantly agreed to, two or three harpoons, several rifles, two axes and other deadly appliances were placed in the quarter boat, and a crew of five, including Jack Hawser, and away they rowed in the direction of where the water was being lashed into foam by some marine monster.

Jack Hawser had made himself a hero with the club, and he could not afford to show the white feather now, so he assumed the lead, and with the harpoon in hand, he took his station in the bow of the boat, and looked even more of a hero than he really was.

The excitement among the crew was most intense, as they slowly neared the locality where some unknown monster was sporting near the surface, and, after approaching to within about ten yards, he suddenly thrust his ugly head above the water and uttered a loud, hissing sound of warning.

Surgeon Halsey was the coolest of the whole of them, and no sooner did the monster show his head than he drew a bead upon it with a rifle and fired, striking him fairly and causing him to leap high out of the water, displaying a huge pair of bat-like wings, at least twenty feet from tip to tip, used like fins, and giving him tremendous power.

At that instant Jack Hawser drove the harpoon straight into his body, and it buried itself deep enough for a good hold. This produced a war right away, and the monster

made a swift plunge downward, causing the rope attached to the harpoon to pay out so rapidly over the gunwale of the boat that it burned a deep hole in it.

Some fifty fathoms went out when the monster began to rise to the surface again, and they pulled in the rope as fast as possible. But not fast enough, for in less than two minutes he appeared close by the boat, and with his immense wings and fiendish head above the surface made direct for the boat.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BATTLE WITH THE DEVIL-FISH.

"Good God, he is coming for us!" cried several of the boat's crew.

"Out with your guns!" yelled Hawser, "and quick about it."

Jack Hawser had expended all his nerve in sending the harpoon into the monster, and now he weakened, scrambling down into the bottom of the boat in quest of safety.

But the others began popping away at the raised and ferocious-looking head of the terrible monster, sending in at least twenty shots before he reached the boat and attracting the inhabitants of Santiago.

Then came a desperate struggle for life or death, for this mystery, this terror of the sea, notwithstanding the desperate wounds he had received, came thundering and foaming through the water, and raising its huge form at least six feet out of the water, spreading its tremendous, bat-like wings, and making a fierce onslaught, it fell upon the heroic crew with a weight and power that nearly capsized it.

Quick as thought, and in an instant of supreme desperation, they drew their knives and commenced the attack. Plunge after plunge in rapid succession with their weapons caused the hot blood to gush from the monster, and it spurted all over them in the encounter.

But the contest was short, for scarcely had half of the creature's weight come upon the boat before it was capsized and the crew were thrown headlong into the water, where a new danger awaited them in the shape of a school of man-eating sharks.

During this time Captain Tongs had sighted the trouble, and jumping into another boat with one of the crew, they rowed hastily to the scene of the contest, arriving just in time to take part in the struggle, to right the overturned boat, and rescue the imperiled crew.

But the contest was not over by long odds, for the monster was far from being subdued, and was manifesting a disposition to vanquish his enemies. The struggle was still for life or death, and the fearful combat seemed to frighten away the sharks.

But the brave fellows manifested no disposition to surrender or relinquish the fight for the mastery, and while struggling to sustain themselves in the foaming water they drove at the devil-fish with their knives, wounding him nearer and nearer to the death at every blow.

Captain Tongs took in the situation at a glance. In spite of the flying foam which the wounded monster was flinging around with his long tail and huge wings, he saw the harpoon which Jack had driven into him, and catching hold of the rope he made it fast to the ring-bolt in his boat, and then assisted the crew.

"Now then, lads, we have him," said he. "Hold fast and stand ready."

The boys rallied the moment they all got into the boat, but the devil-fish had in the meantime plunged deep down and the rope drew taut, forcing the bow of the boat almost under water.

But when just about to go under he seemed to become exhausted and gradually arose to the surface, enabling them to recover their oars and get ready for a second encounter should it come.

It fortunately did not come, for the fiend of the deep had been wounded too many times, and was gradually giving up the ghost.

The harpoon held fast, and after lashing the water a few moments in his dying agonies, he became too much exhausted for further aggression, and seemed to have bare strength enough left to keep from sinking.

Thus pinioned, they towed him ashore, where forty or fifty of the natives assisted them in hauling the monster up upon the bank where a crowd of people assembled to see it.

And it was a sight to behold, for from tip to tip of its terrific wings it measured thirty feet, while from its horrible head to the end of its attenuated tail, it measured forty-five feet, being the largest devil-fish ever captured in these waters. In fact, but a few of the horrible creatures had ever been taken at all, and only by foreigners, for the natives stand in terrible dread of these monsters of the deep, believing that a plague of some sort will surely follow their appearance.

Surgeon Halsey was never so happy in his life, for he had a physiological curiosity, and the remainder of the day was spent by him and his assistant in cutting up and dissecting the monster, the skeleton of which was prepared and taken on board the yacht.

After remaining a few more days in Santiago, they weighed anchor and once more started on their cruise northward.

But the skeleton and membranes of the devil-fish, when brought aboard, proved too much for Chin-Chin, the cook. He couldn't exactly understand what it was for, or what it was brought aboard for.

"Soupee?" he asked of the surgeon.

"No, science," replied the surgeon.

"So be? Me no. Flench dlish."

"What?"

"Me no silence. How cookie?"

"Bah!"

"Oh, sheepe," said Chin-Chin, thinking that he had hit upon the style of meat that the surgeon had brought aboard.

"What?"

"Bah! sheepe! lamee. How cookee?"

"Oh, go to the devil!" said the surgeon, turning and walking away.

"Debble! Oh, me see! Want fish fligsee, alle same like Flenchman," said Chin-Chin, taking out his knife to cut the skeleton of the devil-fish into cooking shape.

But the surgeon managed to preserve his "specimen" and to convince Chin-Chin that he was far beyond the age, and that he was not expected to make either a soup or a chowder of the skeleton of the remarkable devil-fish.

The Yankee Doodle was at this time sailing free before a beautiful wind, and making splendid time up the South American coast.

Their next stop was at Lima, where they put in for fresh provisions, after which they continued along the coast of Peru and Ecuador, returning gradually to the heat of the tropics, and with the vast ocean on the west, and the beautiful coast, with the wonderful Andes range of mountains, extending for thousands of miles, seemingly but a few miles inland on the east, past one of the most wonderful sketches of country and climate to be found on the face of the earth.

And how well they all enjoyed it; what a source of pleasure it was to some, and how delightfully lazy it was in all respects, need not be told, since the reader by this time has become well enough acquainted with the various personages composing the crew to know just how such scenes as they encountered would be met and appreciated.

Singing, telling stories, and doing all sorts of things to make the time pass agreeably, a more rollicking, interesting crew of young fellows never trod a yacht's deck, or joined in the chorus of an echoing song.

Jack Hawser was regarded as a hero, and it must be admitted that circumstances had been very friendly in making him one, and the yarns he told regarding himself and his adventures would fill a volume; while Chin-Chin, with his comical dancing and general queeriness, made himself a favorite. But Tongs was really the hero of heroes, for always the same, true to his trust, and without a particle of nonsense, his eye was ever on the chart and compass.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AWAY—AWAY O'ER THE VASTY DEEP.

THEY made several stops along the coast, but from Ecuador, which is directly on the equator, they stood to the east, headed across the great bay of Panama, and stopped no more until they reached San Jose, California.

What a sail it was! What a reach from Cape Horn to the coast of California! What a tremendous journey they had made in sailing down the Atlantic and up the Pacific ocean.

At San Francisco they made a stay of several days, for the rough usage which the Yankee Doodle had encountered since being fitted out last, made it necessary to have her over-

hauled and repaired, and while this was being done, the crew was ashore—was everywhere almost, leaving the yacht almost wholly in the hands of Tongs, Jack Hawser and Chin-Chin, and a right royal lazy time they had of it, too.

As for the young yachtmen, they were given a grand reception by the San Francisco Yacht Club; after which they visited all the various points of interest in and around the city, and were amply repaid for their trouble, for the wonderful, the healthful, and the interesting exist everywhere in California.

After being refitted and reprovisioned, they again set sail for the Sandwich Islands, and this course took them south by west, back into the torrid zone again, from which they had so lately escaped. What a vast stretch of water it was!

"Yer can shake yer flippers with dry land for some time now, my lads," said Tongs, as they were sailing out of San Francisco.

"Yes," said Commander Hardee, "but we don't care, for:

"The ship is stanch and the crew as brave
As ever danced on the heaving wave,"

he sang, while the others joined in the chorus.

"Bully boys," replied Tongs, who really felt proud of the young fellows, every one of whom had proven himself a first-class hero. "We'll make this stretch to Hiawi in no time, for ther Doodle's feelin' splendid. Just see how she gobbles up that thar breeze; see how she pays 'tention ter her rudder—arn't she a beauty?"

The rough old tar seemed to take her all in at a glance as he spoke. He stood with his hand on the wheel, and never was a man more thoroughly in love with his fair young bride than was Tongs with this beautiful yacht.

It was morning when she sailed, and by nightfall they were out of sight of land, but happy, and all confidence in themselves—their gallant officers, and their noble yacht.

The moon rose early in all her fullness, creating a most beautiful night. It was Jack Hawser's watch, but Tongs still stood at the wheel, and was explaining certain things on the chart to Hardee, who was improving every moment and learning all he could of navigation.

It was one of those soft, lazy, delicious nights, with just coolness and beauty enough to tempt everybody on deck. About a dozen of them gathered amidships with Jack Hawser as the central figure, while Lou Felton paced his short walk forward, acting as lookout.

"Where is Chin-Chin; Let's have a dance," said Will Vanderpool.

"Yes—yes. Get him out."

"Better get out your fiddle first," suggested Joe Bleeker.

"All right. You tune the China, and I'll tune the cat-gut," said he, starting for the cabin.

In a few moments there was a swell of music floating over moonlit waters, for young Vanderpool was as splendid performer on the violin, and at college he was regarded as a remarkable amateur musician.

"But where is your salt Chinaman?" he asked, after playing a moment.

"Me slalt, me be," said Chin-Chin, coming forward and answering for himself.

"Good boy," they all replied.

"Now give us a little 'essence,' Chin-Chin."

"Me do. Me givee 'lessence' alle same likee debel. Me hoop la," said he, and as Will started off into that old familiar tune of "Nicodemus Johnson," Chin-Chin began to fling himself into it in the most grotesque manner imaginable.

A more comical picture cannot be well conceived, for with his wooden shoes, his old plug hat, (almost too bad for a St. Patrick's day parade), his flying pig tail, and his strange make-up as regards dress—being half Chinese and the other half almost anything else you might call it, he went through with a dance that was quite as comical and incomprehensible as was his dress. It was a mixture of "song and dance" Chinese, negro minstrelsy, and Highland fling mixed up together, and they nearly filled his old hat with pennies for his reward.

Then Jack Hawser was called upon to dance a sailor's hornpipe, and he could just do it at any time, for if his education had been neglected in all other respects, he had learned all about the sailor's hornpipe, and

so he gave it to them with all the genuine "salt" flourishes.

The full moon was pouring a flood of silver upon the crested waves, and gilding every portion of the yacht, producing almost a scene of perfect enchantment. Swiftly sped the white-winged beauty over the water, and almost as swiftly flew the hours. In fact, it was almost time to change the watch before there was any disposition manifested to turn in.

"Have you ever sailed this route before, Jack?" asked Harry White, the first mate.

"Ay, ay, sir, often," replied Jack.

"Then you know all about the Sandwich Islands?"

"Know all about 'em; do I? Ah! I wish I had never been there or knowed 'em," said he, sighing, and looking very sober all of a sudden.

It was evident that there was a yarn being worked up, so all thoughts of bed were abandoned again, and Jack was urged to tell why he wished so.

"Oh, messmates, it isn't a thing ter spin; it's sorter sacred," said he, sadly.

"Some love affair, perhaps?"

Jack sighed again, and turned away.

"Oh, never mind, Jack; tell us all about it; it's all sacred with us, if you don't want us to tell it again," said the mate.

"Yes—yes," was the general response, for there was a desire on the part of the company to see if he could possibly tell a bigger lie than he had yet told, although he still maintained his prestige as a "bad man," and they did not dare to come boldly out and tell him that he was the boss liar.

"Wal, messmates, I don't kinder like ter give it away, but if yer'll all promise never ter shoot yer mouths off 'bout it, I'll spin the yarn for yer," said he, at length.

"Oh, we'll never mention it again," said they all, nudging each other.

"Wal, it happened 'bout ten years ago, when I war in ther Sandwiches. Our ship was undergoing repairs in Honolulu, an' I was off on a week's leave of absence. I went back inter the country ter see ther sights, an' have some adventure. Went all alone, as I allus do, when I want ter turn anything up that's red hot. Wal, I was sogerin' 'long the road, 'bout ten miles from the city, one day, when I heard a shriek, a yell, n' a tremendous clatter of horses' hoofs, in a minit it became louder, an' then I heard that the voice in distress was that of a female. At first I thought that there was a highwayman at work, but the next instant a double team of high-spirited horses, madly frightened and wildly running, came into view around a turn in the road, an' I saw a beautiful princess reaching out her arms towards me. 'Take me—take me! I am yours truly.'"

Another round of nudges.

"Wal, I held them horses down until the drivers came up, an' then I got inter the royal carriage with the royal princess, and we were driven directly to the palace. Oh, she was beautiful! I've seen beauties in all lands, but nothin' ever matched her. She flung herself right into my arms an' insisted on my marryin' her because I had saved her life. Then I thought as how I was hunk for the rest of my life, but that cussed ole king, he kicked agin lettin' me marry his daughter. Only think of it!"

"Shame—shame."

"But the gal insisted on it, an' so we planned an elopement. We 'loped and got hitched, arter which we went back ter the palace ter have ther old man give us his blessin'. I'm blessed if he'd do anything of the kind. He set the dogs on me, and ordered his body-guard to charge bayonets on me. They came for me. I seized the musket of one of them, wrenched it from his grasp, an' all alone I killed twenty of 'em, all the while retreating towards the headquarters of the American consul. Here I received protection, but the king was awful mad, an' to save a war between him and the United States I consented ter give up his daughter an' go away," said he, sighing.

"What a shame!"

"And you have never seen or heard of her since?" asked Bleeker.

"Never, only to hear that she had been given to some great nobleman for a wife. So, you see why I wish I had never seen the bloody Sandwiches."

"Yes, yes. Boys, for a messmate we have the son-in-law of a king," said Bleeker, raising his hat.

"Three cheers."

They were given with a will, not that they believed a word he had said, but because he had outlied himself, actually outlied himself.

"No wonder he dreads the Sandwich Islands."

"All honor to the noble American sailor who gave up all rather than bring on a war. All hail, Jack Hawser!"

Another round of cheers greeted him, and Jack swelled up like a toad fish. He never tumbled to it that they were guying him, and even then considered himself the greatest man in the world.

Chin-Chin had listened to Jack's yarn, and seemed utterly paralyzed by it, and until they gave the cheers he could not recover from his stupor. Even then he did not give his feelings away, but expressing himself to himself, he muttered:

"Heapee hellee blazee! Blass liar, allee same ebler was. Oh, slam, bang, slug! Bleat debel eblly time. Blass liar!" saying which he turned away and disappeared down the kitchen with a chuckle.

"It was putty tough, messmates, but you know how strong an American sailor's heart is. I give her up rather than bring on a war. It's all right. Let it pass. Never fire yer mouths off 'bout it, that's all I ask."

"Oh, never."

"But if I see the king while we are there, I shall pull his nose."

"What!"

"I shall tweak his royal cutwater," said Jack, going through the pantomime of twisting a nose.

"Don't, Jack, don't!"

"It might bring on a war."

"I don't care. The princess has gone, and I have the old man to deal with. He insulted me, an American sailor, and no man, be he king or tramp, ever insulted me and swung clear," said Jack, striking his breast savagely.

"Oh, forgive the old fool, Jack. He didn't know what he was doing," said Surgeon Halsey.

"Wal, maybe he didn't; but he insulted me—me, an American tar! Can I possibly land in his kingdom without at least pulling his royal snoot? No, I should hate myself if I did. No man ever insulted Jack Hawser and lived, but being he is a king, I'll let up on him after I have pulled his nose."

It was by this time twelve o'clock; Jack Hawser had done scarcely anything during his watch beyond what has been recorded of him.

Old Captain Tongs stood by the wheel.

"Larboard watch, ahoy!" he yelled, thrusting his head down the companionway.

"Ay, ay," came in smothered tones from below, at the sound of which these on deck began to move away and think of turning in.

Tongs always made it a point to see the new watch well awake and hard at their business before he went below, and to give the man at the wheel implicit instructions regarding how he was to steer during his watch, and to call him in case of any change.

But the sea was calm and the sky was blue, and the duties so simple that almost a novice could have followed instructions.

The watch came up from below, and those on deck were just preparing to turn in. A stiff breeze was filling the sails and driving the yacht onward at about fifteen knots an hour, and save the breaking of the waves against her bow as she dashed them aside, there was not a sound to break the stillness.

Tongs gave the wheel to the second mate, and went forward to be sure all was right and tight before quitting the deck; Ed Van Eyck had been assigned to the lookout. The lights were all right, sails all drawing, course all regular, and as on dozens of other occasions there seemed to be not a thing to suggest or alter.

Tongs took a look at the sky, and then his keen old sailor's eye swept its reach of vision on the waters on all sides and back again to the deck of the yacht.

Finally his eye seemed to rest on some object off on the starboard-quarter; something darker than the shady side of a wave, and he walked off to get the night glass to make sure that he was not deceived. Holding it against the side of the mainmast to steady it, he took a long look in the direction of the object that had attracted his attention, while Hardee and the others stood around to learn the result.

"Hardee, thar's a wreck or somethin' over that. Take a look at it," said Tongs, hand-

ing him the glass. "All hands stand by the sheets! What do you think?"

"It certainly looks like it," said Hardee.

"We'll take a look at it at closer quarters."

"Yes, there's a flag flying, I see it now."

"Starboard hard! Let go the sheets! Steady!"

The yacht came quickly to, and her huge sails swung over to starboard with a rattle and thud.

"Hold that; belay!" cried Tongs.

"Ay, ay, sir!" and in a moment the yacht was standing off toward the suspicious-looking object drifting upon the water.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE STORY OF A WRECK.

"LUFF a little!" cried Captain Tongs. "Steady!"

The members of the yacht club were all gathered forward where Tongs stood, straining their eyes to make out the dark object towards which they were sailing. Commander Hardee was looking at it through the night glass, and the most intense excitement possessed the crew, who but a few minutes before were chatting and rollicking.

"Might it not be a rock, captain?" asked the first mate.

"Take a look at it through the glass. Now, then, hand in! Steady! Port hard! Hold on, let 'em shake!" roared Tongs, as the yacht came to, and her huge sails began to shake and rattle in the wind. "Stand ready, four or five of you, to let go the larboard quarter-boat. Hardee, you hold the yacht where she is, and I'll go and see what this amounts to," said he, turning to the youthful commander. "Let me go."

"Let me go, captain," said the first mate, Harry White. "I am younger than you."

"All right. Heave ahead, my hearty. Get in; lower away; there you are; now pull."

By this time the yacht had lost her headway, and was standing almost still, with her sails fluttering in the wind. Four noble fellows, headed by brave Harry White, were lowered from the davits to the quarter-boat, and the moment they reached the water they pushed away, and at once shoved out their oars, watched eagerly by those on board the yacht.

Forty or fifty quick, strong strokes brought them to within a few yards of the dark object which they had taken for a wreck.

It was not a wreck, that they could plainly see in the moonlight, but a raft, over which the waves were breaking with unpleasant force.

At first there was no living thing visible on it, and they rowed slowly around it, while Harry, who sat in the stern, hallooed with all his might to see if he could attract attention.

"Nothing on that raft," said young Bleeker.

"Well, we will make sure of that before we return. Row up alongside of the leeward," said he, steering the boat close to the raft.

There were several objects on it, but whether they were animate or inanimate, they could not tell, but Harry resolved to board it.

"Steady! Hold on! there, hold!" said he, and the next instant he had leaped upon the raft, while his companions sat at their oars.

It was a large raft, made of spars and planks that had evidently belonged to a sailing vessel. There were boxes and crates lashed to it, but not one sign of life. It was so slippery that he could scarcely keep his feet, but still he held up, resolved to know all about it.

At length he came to a large crate; grasping it to sustain his foothold, he peered down into it, and there beheld a female clasping a child to her bosom, both seemingly dead.

"There is someone here," said he. "Two of you come up and bear a hand, quick."

Hardly sooner said than done, two of the crew leaped upon the raft and made their way to where Harry stood.

There they gazed upon the sight that riveted Harry's attention, and lending their assistance, they managed to lift the stiffened forms of the woman and child upon the crate where they had evidently taken shelter from the waves which had been breaking over the craft.

They were stiff and cold, but not with that peculiar rigidity that marks a corpse, and so they took them, all dripping with water, and carried them tenderly to the boat.

Placing them both gently in the bottom, they hurriedly made further examination of

the raft before abandoning it, but found no further life upon it or any evidence of whence it came, after which they rowed quickly back to the waiting Yankee Doodle!

Surgeon Halsey made a hasty examination just as quick as the boat had been hoisted to the davits and the rescued persons taken into the cabin.

"There is life in them both, but it hangs only by a thread," said he, and together with his assistant they proceeded to resuscitate them by the appliances of every art which they knew.

"There may be others floating around here," said Hardee, "and had we not better lay off and on until daylight?"

"Just as you say. The wind is all right, and that won't be much difficulty in doing it," said Tongs, sweeping the whole heavens with his eyes.

"Then we will stay by and see what the light of day will reveal to us," said Hardee.

The excitement of the adventure put an end to all thoughts of sleep, and the whole crew spent the remainder of the night upon deck, talking over affairs, while the surgeons were expending their skill upon the woman and child so near death's door, if not really there.

Jack Hawser even became so much interested that he unbent himself enough to tell a sensational story of an adventure he once had wherein ten exhausted bodies were taken from a wreck so nearly dead that the captain ordered them buried at sea, and preparations were being made when they all came suddenly to life and told who they were.

"Oh, this is only an ordinary affair. We old salts have met lots of 'em," said he, glancing over to Tongs.

Chin-chiu was standing by, but knowing who it was spinning the yarn, he made no comments, and, in fact, looked as unmoved as a cigar-store Indian.

"Well, Chin-Chin, what do you think of all this?" asked Lou Felton, turning to him.

"Me no. Me no flink," said he, calmly puffing his pipe.

"Well, you have been a sailor for a number of years—you must have met some of these adventures of which he speaks," said Bleeker.

"So be."

"Tell us of one."

"Yes, tell us about it, Chin Chin," said several of the company.

"Me no. Me Glorge Loshington."

"Oh, of course. We understand that. You cannot tell a lie. That's all right. We have all long ago come to the conclusion that you are an Oriental George Washington, but tell us a true story—something that we can all swear to, or at."

"Tell us about some wreck."

"Blig China junkee all go smash. Ebly-body dlow," said he suddenly.

"How many were drowned?"

"Slis thousand," said he soberly.

"What! six thousand people on one junk?" exclaimed several.

"So be."

And that was all they could make of it, anyway. He wouldn't take off one, probably because he didn't mean to spoil a good story for a little thing like that.

The story created a laugh of course.

"Well, that was the shortest and biggest lie I ever heard in my life," said Neil Mer-kent.

"He certainly did not waste any material in constructing his yarn, if he did in the yarn itself," said Frank Fowler.

Chin-Chin calmly smoked his pipe while all these comments were going on, just as though there wasn't a word being said.

"I hate a liar anyhow," said Jack Hawser, turning away just as though indignant, and disappearing down the fore-castle hatch.

Those who had listened to the yarns or "whoppers" that he had told on various occasions, looked in each other's faces for an instant, and then simultaneously burst into a loud laugh that rang merrily over the ocean.

In the meantime the night wore away, and daylight shone once more upon the waves. But so far as the eye could reach there was nothing more to be seen that indicated that any other human being was left for them to rescue. Even the raft had gone to pieces during the night, and scarcely anything remained in sight, and nothing which could in any way explain the mystery of the wreck. So the yacht was put upon her course again.

During the day both woman and child revived sufficiently to give some account of

themselves, although in a very exhausted state yet, owing to past suffering.

She was the young wife, and the child the five-year old daughter of a wealthy merchant in Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, and had been on a visit to her friends in San Francisco. Three weeks before she had taken passage on her return, on board one of her husband's vessels. Fifteen days out from San Francisco the vessel took fire, and she, together with the officers and a portion of the crew, escaped upon a hastily constructed raft, the other portion taking the only boat and escaping in a most brutal and selfish manner, wholly disregarding the appeals of the captain on behalf of the owner's wife and child.

She received the best portion which could be given her; in fact, while the others risked themselves to continued danger, she was so situated that the waves did not reach her only occasionally, when one larger than the others would break over the raft.

But one by one the brave fellows were washed off into the sea, and the last thing she could remember was seeing the noble captain, the last of all, swept from her sight. Then her senses forsook her, and she remembered nothing further until she woke up in the cozy cabin of the Yankee Doodle.

Well, in due time they arrived safely at the Sandwich Islands, and the rescued lady and her child were restored to her friends, who were, of course, profuse in their thanks.

They made a stop of about three weeks at Honolulu, during which time they visited several points of interest, and becoming personally familiar with what they had only heard of before.

Jack Hawser, however, did not go to see his royal father-in-law, the king of the Sandwich Islands, called King Calico, and when some of them asked why he did not, he said he considered himself just as good as the king was, and that if the king wished to apologize to him, he would have to come on board the yacht and do it; he'd see him hanged before he'd humor him, if he was a king.

CHAPTER XX.

AWAY TO AUSTRALIA AND CHINA.

AFTER seeing all they wanted to of the Sandwich Islands, the club again set sail in a southwest course, bound for Australia, the island continent, going from the north to the south Pacific Ocean, into Oceanica, so thickly studded with islands of all sizes and conditions.

Their first stretch was from Honolulu to the Friendly Islands, where they remained and cruised around for a fortnight, finding everything on land and sea that charmed and interested them.

Then they shaped their course for Melbourne, Australia, where they arrived after experiencing some very rough weather, which put their seamanship to the fullest test both night and day.

But they came out all right, yet very glad indeed to find a harbor once more. Here they calculated to remain a month at least, for the purpose of visiting Sidney, Victoria, and perhaps take a run still further south to Van Diemen's Land, and to see all there was to be seen on this wonderful island continent.

Even Tongs and Jack Hawser took turns in going ashore to see the sights during the absence of the club, although Chin-Chin never ventured or seemed to care a snap about going beyond the market, although he had the companionship of several of his countrymen, with whom he passed his leisure in gambling small sums.

After remaining here as long as they desired, they once more set sail northward for Hong Kong, China, stopping a few days at New Guinea. In fact, they stopped at so many islands on the way, that the trip from Melbourne to Hong Kong lasted for nearly two months.

But here they were at last in the oldest country in the world, and in many respects the most wonderful, and it was agreed to spend a month on shore before continuing the voyage.

Chin-Chin, of course, was perfectly at home, or might have been, had he desired to be, but, he didn't appear to be any more interested in his fatherland than he was in anybody's land. In fact, so long as he got what opium, gin and tobacco he wanted, and could play "pokee" with somebody, he didn't care a snap what land he was in.

Hong Kong is really an English port, although in China, and the most important portion of the city is thoroughly English; and yet, there are wonderful sights to be seen in the older Chinese part; temples that were built and worshiped in before the time of Christ, and all sorts of buildings, public and private, with the most curious and wonderful architecture.

But it would require too much space to tell all they saw.

Suffice it to say that they remained at Hong Kong for more than a month, visiting near-by places of interest, and going away at last feeling that they had scarcely got a peep at this wonderful country and people.

But once more the prow of the Yankee Doodle was pointed southward, and the land of silk and tea was left behind regretfully.

Keeping within a few miles of the shore for the most part, they sailed down the China Sea, stopping occasionally at some island or place of interest, and finally reaching the straits of Malacca, fully fifteen hundred miles from Hong Kong. They rested awhile at Malacca, and crossing the straits, spent a week or more on the beautiful island of Sumatra, the home of the white elephant.

But of course they could only see a portion of the vast island, portions of which have never yet been explored, and yet it was resolved to have an elephant hunt before resuming their journey, an elephant hunt above all things!

At Deli they obtained some guides and such other outfit as they needed, and early one morning they started out, mounted on small native donkeys.

After riding a few miles out of the town, they came upon a jungle through which they had to pass in single file, in order to get to the haunts of the elephants beyond.

It was a tiresome journey, but the novelty of it gave them all good spirits. The guides were of course in advance, and one of them spoke Chinese, which made Chin-Chin necessary to act in the capacity of interpreter.

They had worked their way nearly through the jungle, when suddenly their ears were assailed by terrific growling a few rods in advance out in the opening, and instantly everyone stopped with a decided inclination to turn back.

The guide in advance signaled them to keep quiet while he crept stealthily forward to get a view of the animals. He had gone only a few yards, however, before the growls increased in fierceness, and the sounds of a terrific combat going on.

The mystery was soon solved, however, by the guide, who thereupon motioned them to approach, which they did with becoming caution, be assured, and there they beheld a sight they will never forget; that of two huge tigers in deadly combat, their screechings and growls being so loud as almost to craze them.

If the reader has ever seen two cats fight he will have a correct idea of how tigers do it, for being of the same nature as cats they fight in the same manner, but, of course, a thousand times more dreadful. They fairly shook the earth as they fought, leaped and fell together, biting and clawing each other with all their huge strength.

For a moment they all seemed paralyzed by the sights and sounds, and stood looking at the gigantic combatants, scarcely knowing whether to fly or crouch out of sight.

"Boys, it's too bad to let them spoil each other's beautiful skins that way," said Halsey.

"I don't think it's too bad. I only hope they will succeed in killing each other," replied Felton.

"I think we had better assist them both," said Hardee. "Let's five or six of us draw a bead on them and the others keep their fire in reserve. Quick, now, but keep cool."

The guides approved the idea, and the next minute three or four well directed bullets put a sudden end to the terrible fight.

The beasts were wounded and confused, for they had been so absorbed in their contest that they had not noticed the approach of the hunters.

They ceased fighting and stood looking in the direction from whence the shots had come, and then began creeping cautiously towards them, lashing their sides angrily with their tails, their eyes ablaze, and death rampant in their every look and movement.

"Quick, now," shouted the guides. "Aim at their heads!"

"Yes, and take good aim too," said Hardee.

It was a supreme moment, and the hair of many of them actually stood on end. But they concentrated everything within themselves upon the boldly advancing tigers.

Hardee led off with a good shot which did good work, but whether it was the one that he fired which broke the fore leg of one of the animals, or that of Surgeon Halsey, who fired at the same instant almost, they could not tell, but the beast was crippled most effectually at all events.

A dozen shots followed in rapid succession at close quarters, and neither of the magnificent beasts lived to reach them, which so pleased the native guides that they danced, and capered around in a most fantastic way, for to kill one of these monarchs of the jungle is regarded as a wonderful victory.

The next thing to do was to skin them, which the natives proceeded to do with great care and skill, knowing that the object was to preserve the hides as perfectly as possible.

But this had only been just accomplished when an alarm was given that a white bull elephant had been discovered in a grove about half a mile away, and all haste was made to surround and capture him.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN ELEPHANT HUNT.

CHIN-CHIN and the guides rode in advance for the grove of aloes, where the white elephant had been discovered, leaving one of the yachtsmen behind with his donkey to guard the skins of the two tigers which they had killed.

For the first time in his life, almost, he showed excitement and animation. The excitement of their battle with the tigers had aroused him until he hardly felt like himself, and probably like some mighty hunter. At all events, he was in advance, and seemed anxious to come upon the elephant they were in search of.

The guides were the only ones who had ever even seen a wild white elephant, much less hunted one, the others having only read of them. And they knew that it was no child's play, for their hides are so tough that an ordinary rifle ball will scarcely penetrate them.

"Me go—me killee!" said Chin-Chin, getting upon his donkey and proudly shouldering his rifle. "Me heap big huntee."

The rest of them exchanged glances, and wondered how near he would get to the elephant before he would weaken.

In the course of half an hour they came upon the huge beast, quietly browsing upon the branches of a tree, while just beyond a wild giraffe was doing the same thing.

The moment they all saw they became intensely excited, and the guides had all they could do to restrain them from firing upon him at long range.

But after consulting and taking their experience, they scattered in twos and began creeping stealthily toward the elephant, with the understanding that they should not fire until the guides had done so, after which they could do all they liked of it.

Chin-Chin was the most anxious and excited of any of them, and it was feared that he would forget himself and fire too soon, thus enabling the elephant to escape before they could get near enough to fire with effect, so Hardee took him under his charge, and they all crept carefully among the underbrush towards the unsuspecting monster.

Finally they got so near the unsuspecting beast as they could without exposing themselves. The guide drew up his huge elephant rifle and fired.

The ball had scarcely started him when a dozen rifles from the several different ambushes opened upon him with bloody effect.

The elephant reared and plunged, and started first in one direction and then another; but at each turn receiving fresh volleys, and became crazed and bewildered.

Gradually they closed in upon him, firing continually, wounding him at nearly every shot, while he bellowed loudly and kept turning around and around.

Finally, after they had completely riddled him with bullets, he staggered and fell upon his knees as though about to give up the ghost.

Chin-Chin, who had been yelling like a demon, was the first to rush upon him with

a big knife, evidently resolved upon putting in a few bloody finishing touches.

"Ho—ho! me cut he belly all lout!" he cried, as he dashed upon the kneeling beast.

"Keep back!" shouted several.

"Me, no; me cut le stuffin lout," said he, and, approaching the elephant, he actually did drive the knife into his side.

But the next instant there was a change, and Chin-Chin, oh, where was he?

Turning quickly, the elephant seized the audacious Chinaman with his trunk, and giving him a toss, landed him in the top of a tall tree, where he lodged entirely out of sight and also out of breath.

But the poor beast was so badly wounded that he could make but little further resistance, or at least could not advance upon the hunters, who, so thoroughly excited, did not even notice the fate of poor Chin-Chin, and gathered closer and closer upon the elephant, firing now and then whenever he manifested any symptoms of not being dead or about to die.

But he finally succumbed and fell over upon his side with a loud bellowing, and they gathered around to watch his death struggle which lasted some time, for it takes a long time for such a huge animal to die.

"But where is Chin-Chin?" asked several.

The guide walked away a few yards and looked up among the branches of the tall tree where Chin-Chin disappeared a moment before as though he had been shot out of a gun, and then pointed up where he saw one of his legs, he having lodged in the crotch of a limb.

"Ah, there he is," shouted Hardee.

"Wonder if he is dead?"

"Most likely. Chin-Chin!"

They waited for a response, and finally they saw his leg move and heard his voice:

"Heap hellee Gamlathurs!" they heard him moan. "Where he?"

"Here—here we are. Are you hurt?"

"Where Chin-Chin?" he called down.

"Why, you are up there, ain't you?"

"Me go helle guess, so be," he muttered, and then he began to extricate himself from his fortunate imprisonment.

The elephant was still threshing the earth with his trunk and uttering loud trumpetings, which, however, were growing more and more feeble.

Chin-Chin recovered sufficiently to comprehend his situation, and began to work his way downward encouraged by the club, although when he appeared not to be hurt much, they laughed at and joked him mercilessly.

"Where have you been to, Chin-Chin?"

"What sent you up there?"

"How came you to go up so suddenly?" and other questions were put to him as he neared the ground again.

"Heap hellee! Where lelephant?" he asked looking wildly around.

"There he lies; what's the matter with you?"

"Me no," he replied, rubbing himself, and looking wildly around.

"How came you up that tree?"

"Oh, I know. He went up there to escape all danger," said Felton.

"Me killee; me catchee hellee, alle samee," said Chin-Chin, sadly.

"What did you go up there after?"

"After cocoanuts, I guess."

"Elephant stingee, guess."

"Why don't you get square and kill him?"

Chin-Chin looked at this almost dead elephant, but the fight was all out of him, and he moved a few feet away.

"Elephant kickee likee hellee, so be."

They could but laugh at the poor fellow, who but a few moments before had been so brave and impetuous, and now so humble and so willing to withdraw. And they did laugh at him, but all the laughter in the world could not get his fight up again. Chin-Chin was sick. He had had all the elephant hunt that he wanted.

But now that the huge beast was dead he hardly knew what to do with him. As for Surgeon Halsey he wanted to dissect him on the spot, and it was finally agreed to skin him, secure his tusks, and leave the carcass where it lay.

But to do this was no boy's play, and it took all hands two hours with hard work to get that huge skin from its dead owner, and even then it was so heavy that two donkeys had all they could stagger under to carry it.

They finally got away with it, however, and

just at nightfall returned to town and got their trophies on board the yacht.

The next day was spent in seeing other sights and curiosities, and securing mementoes of this visit, in the shape of minerals, flowers, fruit, woods, and a specimen of almost everything that they could transport for the benefit of their already large museum of curiosities, gathered at the different places at which they had stopped.

CHAPTER XXII.

FROM SUMATRA TO INDIA.

THE next day they hoisted sail and anchors, and once more stood on their journey through the straits of Malacca, leading into the bay of Bengal, the largest body of water by this name in the world.

From Deli, Sumatra, to Calcutta, India, is about fifteen hundred miles, but as their course lay through the Mergul Archipalego, they made at least a dozen stops at the wonderful islands comprising it, for some of them are the most beautiful that ever reared their flower-crowned and verdure-covered crests to the sun.

In fact, for the next six weeks they were completely lost amid the continually occurring beauties and objects of wonder, while the spice breezes which wafted around them and bellied the weatherbeaten sails of the Yankee Doodle, seemed to soften them into a condition of repose and inactivity that was almost painful; why, even Jack Hawser forgot to spin yarns, and everybody seemed intoxicated with beauty, perfume and tranquillity.

At Cape Negruls, latitude 15, longitude 25, they stood directly across the great Bay of Bengal, and headed for Calcutta, the most important city on the great continent of India, then about five hundred miles away.

Here they arrived in good time, all safe and snug, and with a very little sickness on board. It was agreed to stop at Calcutta a month or more, and some of them were inclined to cross the continent—about eighteen hundred miles—by rail, while the others navigated the yacht down the bay again, around the Island of Ceylon, and up the Indian Ocean to Bombay, where they were to join again.

It would require a whole story to tell what they saw in India. This is one of the oldest countries on the globe, and here it was that civilization had its birth thousands of years ago, long before which we read of in the Bible, and everywhere all over its vast expanse of territory, there are evidences of antiquity far more interesting than Egypt or any other land in the whole world.

These places of interest, such as temples of surpassing beauty, hoary with the frowns of thousands of years; tombs rich in historical lore, magnificent gardens, palaces, and the abodes of princess, to say nothing of the wonderful productions of the soil, and the exquisite gems produced by the native artisans.

They journeyed for miles around, but on every hand there were evidences of architectural triumphs older than the pyramids, and other objects that almost fascinated them. In addition to this, they every where found friends among the native noblemen and Europeans residing there, and when it came time to part with them to continue their journey, they almost regretted it, and wished to remain there all their lives.

But finally five of them arranged it with the others to take the yacht around to Bombay, while they went overland, stopping at various places, and gathering all the information and objects of interest they could, agreeing to meet them at Bombay in six weeks.

And here again the journey to both parties became of even greater interest than before, for while the overland party had all they could attend to, the yacht, under the charge of Tongs, swept through the pleasantest portion of her journey.

At the end of seven weeks the party joined again at beautiful Bombay, a city half English and half Indian, but whose ancient beauties and monuments of civilization rival those of the nineteenth century, erected by those who regard themselves as the foremost people of the world.

Here they spent two weeks very agreeably, during which the yacht was being overhauled under the supervision of Captain Tongs, and it was from here that they not only telegraphed to their friends at home, but wrote long letters regarding what they had seen and enjoyed.

From Bombay they stood across the Ara-

bian Sea towards the straits of Aden, at the entrance of the Red Sea.

They were now more than half way around the globe, although if they had doubled the Cape of Good Hope instead of taking the course they did, they would have had more than half of their journey still before them.

Up to this time they had enjoyed excellent health as a body, owing to the precautions taken in the matter of food and clothing, under the guidance of Captain Tongs, who had sailed in every water and knew the requirements of every climate. And they had all become as brown as berries, and as hardy as old salts through labor and exposure that had now lasted nearly a year.

The voyage across the Arabian Sea was not quite so pleasant as they had lately enjoyed, so far as the weather was concerned, and after a long rest they were once more put in their metal for a few weeks.

A party of them were seated in the cock-pit one afternoon talking over the events of the past few months, after arranging their curiosities and stowing them away, and finally things became dull, and something was required to break up the monotony.

Jack Hawser was forward, perched upon the king-head, smoking his old black pipe and evidently communing with himself, or thinking how much money he would have at the end of the voyage, and how big a spree he could have after reaching New York again; or he may have been thinking of what an easy time he had had during the past year, with a prospect of still another year of the same bliss. At all events he was in a brown study and took no notice of the members of the yacht club who were gathered aft.

Chin-Chin was leaning over the rail looking at some albatross who were sailing around to the leeward on their lazy wings, and probably thinking what a nice stew or pot-pie he could build if he had only one of them on board.

The fellows were dozing or yawning on account of the dullness, when Will Vanderpool called to him.

"Come hither, celestial gun with the double chin," but Chin-Chin never heard him, or if he did, did not understand him.

"Come here, Chin-Chin," he called again.

"Me?" he then asked, looking around.

"Yes, come aft here."

He came slowly along as though in doubt whether he was going to get a blowing up or not. Tongs stood at the wheel with his cast-iron face looking straight ahead and paying no attention to anything beyond his duty, while the graceful yacht, under a single reef, was forging ahead at the rate of fifteen knots an hour, with a stiff breeze from the north.

"Me come, hey?" said Chin-Chin.

"Stand up there and tell us about that elephant you killed in Sumatra," said Will.

"Oh, hellee damee!" said he, turning away.

"Nonsense. Tell us about it."

"Makee flook, so be."

"No; tell us how you killed him."

"Yes, go ahead," said several others.

Chin-Chin looked at the young men as they sat or reclined around, expecting to see if they were not guying him, but they all looked so honest that he was taken in, and perhaps thinking they had forgotten the circumstances of the hunt, he proceeded:

"Shootee me elephant alle same five slix time; knockee stuffin' lout; stabbe with kniffee alle in belly. Die, so be," was the way he described it.

"Well, how about your being up in that palm tree?" asked Will.

This rather got the best of Chin-Chin, and he squirmed a little.

"Me kille elephant an' go up tree to see 'nother elephant somewhere," said he.

This produced a roar of laughter that might have been heard for two miles.

"Good for you, Chin-Chin," cried several.

"So be. Me alle same blighuntee. Knockee elephant all pieces," and he retired amid another burst of laughter.

"Now, then, let us call on Jack Hawser," said Neil Merkent, and Jack was summoned.

"Well, shipmates, what is it?" said he.

"Did you ever sail in these waters before?" asked Will Vanderpool.

"Did I? Well, that's good, eh, Tongs?"

Tongs was watching the weather and the yacht (as Jack knew he was) and made no reply.

"Well, the fact is, shipmates, I had a big adventure near Aden, once."

"Indeed. Tell us about it."

"Yes, by all means."

"I never said anything 'bout this afore, an' only the ole man there," winking and nodding at Tongs, who was looking away, "knows about it. Yer see, we war bound from Gibraltar to Bombay, an' sailin' through the Red Sea, we were attacked by five pirate vessels, an', bein' all unarmed, of course we were taken. Yes, it war tough for us old salts, every one of us being fighters, ter be taken by the bloody Arab pirates, but we had to knuckle down, although I killed fifteen of 'em with a belaying pin."

"Is that so?" and several of them looked at each other with open eyes.

"Yes, for I'm that kind of a tar, I am. Well, they got us an' took us, ship an' all, inter a cove port where the tall trees made a sort of screen that shut us out from view of any vessel that might be sailing along that way, and thar they robbed the vessel of everything. We were all taken inter an old castle whar the pirates had their headquarters, an' thar held for slaves. An' ther never war such magnificence seen as them pirates had got together in that place. All sorts of gold and silver dishes, an' all that they had war stolen. I tell you it war great."

"Wall, I took inter my head one night ter bust that gang up. Unbeknown I got a lot of swords an' pistols that they had taken from ships, an' put myself at the head of about twenty brave Yankee lads. At a given signal we pounced upon them pirates an' shot until there were only five of 'em left, an' they threw up their flippers an' weakened."

"Good boy," shouted several.

"Yes, an' we captured all that treasure."

"Is that so? What did you do with it?"

"What did we do with it? Thunder and tar! that's what makes me mad."

"What does?"

"Wal, I'll tell yer. We captured all the treasure—much as a million dollars a piece for us—an' loaded it aboard our vessel, an' war just sailin' out inter the sea again when 'long come a French man-of-war steamer an' took it all away from us."

"Gracious!"

"Fact."

"What robbery?"

"Der yer wonder that I hate the French?" said he, looking intensely tragic.

"No wonder indeed," said they all.

"And they took all that treasure away from you, did they?" asked Lou Felton.

"Yes, they did, an' turned us adrift without a shot in our locker."

"Shame, shame!"

"Belay that gab. Forward there, and take in that foresail and jib," shouted Tongs, breaking in upon Jack's yarn.

Away they scattered and scampered to execute the captain's orders.

So much interested had they become in the amusement of hearing Jack's yarn that they did not notice the sudden evidence of a storm that now lowered upon their weather beam, and which came bearing down upon them with a darksome frown and with equatorial suddenness.

Hardly had the sheets been lowered before a white squall struck them, and the yacht reeled over almost on her beam ends, and almost instantly a darkness that could almost be felt shut down around them, and thunders crashed and lurid lightning illuminated the darkness with streaks of vivid light as it played dangerous and fantastic tricks around the devoted craft. Dire destruction seemed bent upon them.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FROM ADEN TO GIBRALTAR.

THE white squall which swooped down upon our friends while in the Arabian Sea, and in which we left them at the end of the last chapter, passed, after subjecting them to a few moments of terror, and once more the sun shone out, and balmy-winged tranquillity reigned upon the waters.

At the end of a month's run, they passed through the Straits of Aden and entered the historic waters of the Red Sea.

Who could sail over the surface of this sea without having his mind revert to sacred history?

Every one of the club was so impressed, and were discussing history, fable, and romance connected with the sea, and would have been seriously impressed by their surroundings, had not Jack Hawser insisted upon telling a yarn, a personal experience of his, wherein he

swore that on weighing anchor on one occasion in the Red Sea, one of the flukes brought up an ancient chariot wheel, with the name of Pharaoh stamped upon it, showing conclusively that it was a relic of the renowned passage of the Red Sea by the children of Israel.

They made several stops at different points along the shores of the historical body of water, collecting mementoes and gathering information regarding things of which they had read, and, in fact, consumed two months in sailing from Aden to Suez.

The building of the Suez canal across a neck of land only a few miles in extent, and which had for an unknown period separated the Red Sea from the Mediterranean Sea, now joins the two practically into one body of water, and enables vessels to pass from one to another with the greatest ease, thus doing away with a long and dreary voyage which merchants of the olden time were obliged to make.

Through this wonderful canal the Yankee Doodle made her way, and in good time sailed into the time-honored waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

And what historical charms linger around every portion of this wonderful body of water—this island sea. Scarcely a yard square or a fathom deep of it that has not seen enactments which only live now in history.

To speak of Italy alone—think of Rome, Venice, Naples, Sardinia, Corsica, Sicily—the hundreds of islands each with a history; each with its rare monuments of the grand and glorious past.

They visited all these localities and many more; so many, in fact, that three months were exhausted before they reached the coast of France, and the yacht's hold was nearly full of relics, specimens and historical mementoes.

At Marseilles, France, they halted for some time, and the majority of the crew went over to Paris, where they enjoyed the sights and delights of that wonderful capital, after which they visited Madrid, Spain, by rail, and spent nearly a month on Spanish soil, examining thousands of objects of great rarity and historical interest. In truth, they did not return to the yacht at Marseilles for nearly two months, during which time Tongs, Jack Hawser and Chin-Chin enjoyed all that such people could enjoy in having all that heart could wish, and scarcely anything to do.

Their next stretch was to Gibraltar, that world-renowned fortress, in which England holds the key of war and commerce. Here they arrived after a month's sail, during which they made several stops, and once they were upon the uneasy waters of the Atlantic, with home only three thousand miles away.

After visiting the city and fortress, they sailed directly for London, England, where they remained for another month, visiting nearly every portion of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, being everywhere received with all the honors due to Americans, and to a body of intrepid youth who had sailed such a brave voyage almost to its termination.

And becoming acquainted with English yachtsmen, it is no wonder that they received a challenge for an ocean yacht race, which they, of course, accepted. They all knew what the Yankee Doodle could do and stand, and they felt that it would be a fitting sequel to their long journey if they could only show a clean keel to the loudly extolled craft belonging to the flower of England's pleasure marine.

The challenge was accepted, and during the next week very little else in the sporting world was thought of besides the yacht race. Up to that time the English had always been beaten by the adventurous Yanks, and it was with something of the same feeling, probably, that a pickerel snaps at a frog, that the bold yachtsmen went for the Yankee Doodle.

If they could vanquish a vessel with such a record and such a name, they thought that some of the laurels captured by the America, years before, might be freshened up and returned to the English brow, and so it was no wonder that excitement grew as the race was talked over.

The race was to be fifty miles out at sea and back again, for one thousand pounds, bar all rules and everything, but actual time, regulations that were greatly against the Yankee Doodle on account of her size and lack of fancy "clothing" for light breezes.

But that brave Yankee crew knew what

their yacht could do, having tested her in all weathers, from zephyr to a hurricane, and their only prayer was for wind, and good lot of it.

To their great delight the day appointed for the race was a wild and stormy one, so wild, in fact, that the commander of the London Yacht Club attempted to take matters in his own hands, and postpone the race to a more favorable time.

But the brave Yankee crew refused to listen to anything of the kind. The race had been set for that day, bar everything, which was greatly against them, and it must come off accordingly, sink or swim.

And reluctantly the boldest of the English yachts came to the front rather than endure the laugh of the world, and at the appointed hour they started for the race.

The wind blew a gale. It was life for the Yankee Doodle, but death to anything less stanch than she was.

There was sufficient pluck among the Englishmen, however, to brace up and do their best in the face of any danger, and so the race was begun, five first-class yachts against the single Yankee Doodle, and she no better prepared for the contest than she had been at any time since leaving New York.

But she was a Yankee ship with a Yankee crew, and every man on board of her knew just what to do to get the very best out of her, and no one entered into the spirit of the encounter deeper than did old Captain Tongs.

The result of the race may be told in a few words. The weather became more heavier and more boisterous with every mile from shore, and one by one the English yachts reduced their sail in order to live, while the Yankee Doodle kept right on with nearly everything set and her stern full in the face of her rivals after the first twenty miles of the race.

One by one they dropped out of the race and returned to harbor, until only two of them remained in the contest, and they far behind. Finally, on the home run, the Yankee Doodle came plowing in ten miles ahead, welcomed by cannon, steam-whistles, and the wild plaudits of thousands who had watched the contest from the start.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

THE termination of the yacht race was one of the greatest victories that ever fell upon American canvas, for her English competitors were rigged and manned with the latest and best, and taking the Yankee Doodle just as she was, with her hull dirty and overloaded, they believed that an easy victory awaited them, which would in a measure kill the prestige of American yachtsmen.

But in this they were mistaken, as Englishmen have always been, from the battle of Bunker Hill to the last yacht race, and so it always will be, while Englishmen set themselves up to be the lords of creation, as against everybody else in the world.

It was a bitter pill to swallow, but like true Saxons they swallowed it, and made up as good a face over it as they could, while acknowledging that they were second in all that goes to make up a first-class nation.

The result of that victory was a series of receptions by the yachtsmen and sporting-men of England in which every member of the Yankee Yacht Club came in as a hero, even Jack Hawser, who, of course, astonished several Englishmen with his yarns, spun in the first person singular.

But after enjoying their victory in various ways, for two or three weeks, and after they had visited all the various points of interest in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and France, they at length began to get homesick, being so near their native land, and finally set sail due west for America.

It was a great day, for a dozen or more of English yachts and as many steamers accompanied the Yankee Doodle out to sea, and as she passed the various forts the royal salute was given, and the English flag was dipped in honor of the departure.

And when once out upon the broad Atlantic and after parting company with the friends they had made, they once more seemed to be cut loose from the world, and everything was centered in the bold yacht that had borne them thus far around the globe.

The first two or three days were fine, and with a good quarter breeze the Yankee Doodle was making twelve knots per hour on her

homeward passage—almost "steamer time"—when suddenly they sailed into the center of a regular Atlantic cyclone.

The captain had his eye upon the glass, and knew three hours before they struck it that there was trouble ahead, and so when the cyclone struck them the sails were all in double reef and everybody standing by ready to move at a moment's notice.

The wind blew a gale, and the waves ran so high that they threatened every moment to fall upon and bury the yacht and her devoted crew beneath her foamy crests.

More and more furious blew the gale, and finally the yacht was stripped of every shred of canvas, and was being driven before the wind under "bare poles," in other words, she was bounding along without a stitch of canvas set, pushed along only by the force of the wind.

Every man on board, save Tongs, who stood at the wheel like a fate, was either below or lashed to some portion of the yacht, for every few minutes a huge wave would break over the decks and sweep away everything movable.

Even poor Chin-Chin was floored, and the kitchen fire put out, which made him as mad as a wet hen. But he could not get on deck to swear at anybody, and so he was obliged to have it all out with himself between decks.

"Helle damee! Me no, me klick. Allee washee slalt watee in soupee, allee han' kick-ee an' say cookee dam foolee. Me no—" and just then a huge wave struck the Yankee Doodle and made every timber creak and yell as though endowed with life.

And that same wave knocked Chin-Chin galley west, landing him into one corner of the kitchen, and causing him to sit down into a big kettle of soup.

He got out of it, of course, without any unnecessary delay, and he swore:

"Oh—oh, hellee! oh—oh, damee?" he exclaimed, as he danced around the kitchen. "Me alle bilee; me allee killee; oh, hellee!" and during the next ten minutes he whooped around the narrow confines of his kitchen and called down all the curses of the Chinese gods upon the Yankee Doodle.

But after fighting with the storm king for five hours, the yacht bounded out of the cyclone and once more danced upon calmer waters.

The next ten days brought finer weather, and the Yankee Doodle under full sail, sped along towards the land of liberty, and the song of the crew sounded more joyous than ever before.

From the highest to the lowest there seemed a higher and a merrier tone, for after being gone nearly two years, they were now approaching home—home, sweet home.

Hardee had telegraphed from London on the eve of their departure, giving full particulars of what had transpired since the last dispatch, and promising an arrival within a certain time.

Those who were with the club when they started out and saw the crowds of friends who gathered to see them off can, of course, form an idea of what a reception awaited them on their return.

For three or four days the parents and friends of the club kept a tug boat waiting off Sandy Hook to hail the arrival of the Yankee Doodle in whose honor a grand honor was in store.

From nearly every point the different members of the club had written or telegraphed home to their friends, and they of course knew much of the peril and adventure which they had encountered since leaving New York, and this had wrought them up to a pitch that nothing short of an ovation could appease.

And on the twentieth day from London the Yankee Doodle was signaled from Sandy Hook, and a great gathering of friends was of course, the immediate result.

The reception home was one of the highest that was ever accorded to a vessel, and even Chin-Chin and Jack Hawser came in for a full share of all the honors.

As for Tongs, he not only had a reception by the parents and friends, but all the sailing masters and captains in port united in giving him a welcome in their own hearty way, which touched him nearer than anything else could do; and in answer to a toast in his honor he not only touched upon his own thankfulness for the honors paid him, but he said:

"Messmates, I'm nigh unter sixty years old, an' I've sailed all my life on the briny. But through thick an' thin, in good weather an' bad, I never met a finer or a braver crew

of American sailors than I have been with during she past two years. For work, for fight, or for frolic, I give first place to the YANKEE YACHT CLUB with whom I have

circumnavigated the globe. Three cheers for the YANKEE DOODLE and her splendid crew!"

[THE END.]

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